Advantures In The Wilds of North America

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PREFACE.

It is due to the Author of the following pages to state, that the Adventures which we have selected for publication form only a small portion of those which he has kindly placed in our hands.

In making our selection we have been guided by the space at our disposal, and by a desire to render our pages at once varied and interesting.

At the same time it will be seen by the contents of the Second Part, that we have drawn freely on those piscatorial adventures, the love for which, Mr. Lanman frankly states, led him into the wilds of his native country. And we cannot help thinking that in the present day, when the waters of our small island afford so inadequate a supply of sport to the rapidly increasing fraternity of Waltonians, and the Atlantic is so easily crossed, many of our readers will be glad to be put in possession of the extensive angling experience, in the United States and Canada, of so great an adept in the art as Mr. Lanman.

In a manuscript prefatorial communication which acccompanies Mr. Lanman's papers, he states, that some years ago he abandoned a mercantile career in New York, and started for the Western State more intent on pleasure than fortune-making. His wanderings, which were performed on foot, on horseback, and in canoes, led him through the Valley of the Mississippi, the Basin of the Great Lakes, the Valley of the St. Lawrence, and over the extensive chain of mountains extending from those commanding the Bay of Fundy to those which pour their waters into the Gulf of Mexico.

A portion of these wanderings appeared in American periodicals, and elicited the following warm commendations from Washington Irving, which are extracted from letters to their author.

"I return you thanks for the delightful entertainment which your summer rambles have afforded me. I do not see that I have any literary advice to give you, excepting to keep on as you have begun. You seem to have the happy enjoyable humour of old Isaac Walton, and I trust you will give us still further scenes and adventures on our great internal waters, depicted with the freshness and graphic skill of your present volumes.

"In fact, the adventurous life of the angler amidst our wild scenery, on our vast lakes and rivers, must furnish a striking contrast to the quiet loiterings of the English angler along the Trent, or the Dove, with country milkmaids to sing madrigals to him, and a snug, decent, country inn at night, where he may sleep in sheets that have been laid in lavender."

And in a second letter, Mr. Irving says,—

"I am glad to learn that you intend to publish your narrative and descriptive writings in a collected form. They carry us into the fastnesses of our mountains, the depths of our forests, the watery wilderness of our lakes and rivers; giving us pictures of savage life and savage tribes, Indian legends, fishing and hunting anecdotes, the adventures of trappers and backwoodsmen, our whole arcanum, in short, of indigenous poetry and romance; to use a favourite phrase of the old discoverers—'they lay open the secrets of the country to us.' I cannot but believe your work will be well received, and meet with the wide circulation which it assuredly merits."

With these high marks of approval on the mine from which the following adventures are taken, we introduce Mr. Lanman to the English reader, feeling confident that he will be found an interesting and instructive companion.

C. R. WELD.



ADVENTURES

WILDS OF NORTH AMERICA.

CHAPTER I.

ALPINE REGION OF THE MISSISSIPPI.

LAKE PEPIN.

THAT portion of the Mississippi which extends from Prairie Du Chien to Lake Pepin is the most mountainous and truly beautiful on the whole river, and may with strict propriety be called the Alpine Region. The river here varies from a quarter to a full mile in width, and on either side throughout the whole distance is a range of mountains which sometimes actually bend over the river, and sometimes recede into the interior for several miles. The Mississippi here is rather sluggish, but perfectly transparent, and is studded by islands, which are covered with every variety of forest-trees found between Kentucky and the Great Lakes. But the willow and the elm are pre-eminently beautiful. Well do I remember with what delight I mused upon the changing landscape, as our vessel glided onward and onward into the wild and silent wilderness. The mountains of this region are not so lofty as the Highlands of the Hudson, (to which they have been compared,) but they are far more picturesque, fantastic, and extensive. At one moment may be seen a cone-shaped mountain rising to the height of some eight hundred feet, and completely covered, to the summit, with a carpet of grass; now the eye will linger on a perpendicular bluff, pictured against the sky, like a fortress of the Mound Builders, and actually frown-

ing upon the softly flowing stream that laves its foliage-hidden base; now, you sail in the shadow of a pillared temple that seems to prop the sky; and now, along a continued succession of peaks and points that fade away, until lost in the rosy atmosphere of evening. During all this time, your vessel will be gliding around and between the most charming green islands, some of them containing a solitary grave, others a little brotherhood of Indians, lounging upon the grassy opening before their wigwams; while some happy bird will favour you with an occasional song, or the leap of a trout take the fancy captive, to revel in the cool chambers of the stream. Here it is, too, that the famous Island Mountain rises to the height of five hundred feet, covered with trees, and capped by a cluster of broken rocks. It is several miles long and about one in width, and is the largest island in the Mississippi. From time immemorial it has been celebrated for the number of its rattlesnakes, and on a grassy plot at its base stands a cluster of graves, where repose the ashes of stranger Indians, who died upon the island from wounds inflicted by these reptiles.

The next object that I would attempt to describe on my way up the Mississippi, is Lake Pepin. It lives in my memory as the Horicon of the wilderness. It is an extended portion of the Mississippi,—twenty-three miles long, and from three to four wide. It is surrounded with hills, which abound in almost every variety of game; its shores are gravelly, and covered with the most valuable agates and cornelians; the water is clear, and very deep; and it yields the very best fish in great abundance. My first view of Lake Pepin (I wish I knew how it came by that name!) was on one of the most charming evenings that I ever witnessed. The cloudless sky was studded with stars, and the moon sailed upward and onward with an uncommon beauty, as if proud of the wilderness world she was then flooding with her beams. For hours did I sit musing upon the eastern shore, near the outlet, whence I could discern no less than sixteen peaks or bluffs, looming in solitude against the horizon. "The holy time was quiet as a nun, breathless with adoration." The water was without a ripple, and reflected in its pure bosom every star;

while the moon, as if determined that it should so remain for ever, spanned it with a bar of gold. The only sounds that trembled in the air were the hoot of an owl, the wail of a loon, and a hum from the insect world. I looked and wondered until the night was far spent, and the dew upon my face was heavy and cold.

It was while tarrying at this lake that the captain of our steamer was honoured by a visit from Wabashaw, the head chief of the Sioux nation. He was attended by several of his counsellors, and in all his movements had the bearing of a proud prince. He is a young man, and said to be a brave and eminently successful warrior. Our captain treated him to wine, and I gave him a present of tobacco. The captain was so pleased with the natural curiosity, as he called the chief, that he summoned all his lady passengers to obtain a glimpse. The ladies soon made their appearance, and while staring at the chief, now laughing, and now laying their hands upon his ornaments, a most ferocious glance all at once shot from his eye, and, uttering a scornful speech, he bolted from the ring of impudent spectators. The cause of this singular movement was, that it is considered disgraceful for a Sioux chief to be seen in the company of women, or to be spoken to and stared upon by them. The only person whose hand he would take on going ashore was mine; and when I happened to meet this chief on a subsequent occasion, he treated me with marked attention, and presented me with a handsome pipe.

At the time that I visited Lake Pepin there were a number of Sioux Indians encamped upon its shores. Among the lodges which I visited was that of a woman, ninety years of age, and a widow. She looked exceedingly wretched, but was so intelligent and amiable that I almost fell in love with the old antediluvian. I cannot give the whole of her long story, but an idea of its character may be obtained from the following episode, which I listened to, seated by her side, and that of her only descendant —a handsome boy. Her attention had been directed to our steamer, which lay moored a short distance off, when she suddenly broke out with the following:—"How rapidly does time fly! A short time ago the light canoe was the only thing that glided

upon this lake; but now we often hear the groaning of the great fire-vessel, as it sweeps along like an angry stag. The white man's conduct appears strange, I cannot understand its purpose. O, I am an old woman and a fool!

"Many, very many have been my trials. Thirty years has my husband been dead. Eight brave sons have I had, but they were all killed in battles with the Chippeways. I also had two daughters, who were like the does of the prairie; but the Great Spirit has long since taken them to the happy land. My only relative, now living, is this boy. O, I am an old woman, and have no business to live!

"But I will not complain. The Great Spirit is at my fireside, and has given me a helper in the dark evening of my days. This boy-hunter supplies me with food. His arrow never fails, and the winds always tell him where to find the sweet fish. He paddles my canoe, he brings me wood for my fire, and he sleeps by my side in our comfortable lodge. O, I am an old woman!--but what is there in the world that I need, and cannot obtain?"

May the smiles of Providence for ever rest upon this mother of a great nation, whose glory is personified in her feeble and decrepit form.

The most romantic legend, however, associated with the Mississippi Horicon is the story of Winona. She was the daughter of a chief, and lived about one hundred years ago. She was exceedingly beautiful and universally beloved. Her father had promised her hand to a favourite warrior, but her heart had been pledged to another, not less brave, but more noble and youthful. For many months she would not listen to the wishes of her father;—but his sterner nature was roused, and he vowed that she *must* marry the object of *his* choice. Weeks passed on, and she knew that she must yield. Nightly did she meet her accepted lover, but always talked to him of the Spirit Land, as if she had been a queen of that fantastic realm. The marriage night had been appointed, and the chief had proclaimed a feast. To all outward appearance a change suddenly came over the daughter's mind, and she smiled and talked, like one about to be made a happy bride. Among the delicacies that were to be eaten on the

occasion, was a certain berry that was found in great perfection upon a certain hill or bluff. It was a pleasant summer afternoon, and all the female friends of Winona, accompanied by herself, were picking the desired berries.

Carelessly did they all wander up the hill-side, while an occasional laugh would ring upon the air; but Winona was only seen to smile, for (though those loving friends knew it not) her heart was darkened by many a strange shadow. Carelessly did the berry-gatherers wander on; when all at once a low melancholy song fell upon their ears, and lo! upon the very edge of a beetling precipice stood the form of the much loved Winona.

Her song was death-like, and when her companions were intuitively convinced of the contemplated deed, they were stupefied with horror. Winona motioned them to keep back, while her song increased until it became a perfect wail. The burthen of it was,

"Farewell, sisters:—
I am going to the Spirit Land;
My warrior will come after me,
And we shall be blessed."

One moment more, and Winona, the pride of all the Indian villages on Lake Pepin, was deeply buried in its clear cold bosom. And this is the story that hallows the loftiest peak of this lake. I obtained it, as here related, from one of her kindred, and I believe it to be true. As to Winona's warrior, it is said that he lived for many years a hermit, and finally died a madman. So runneth many a song of life.

CHAPTER II.

RED WING VILLAGE.

MOUTH OF THE ST. PETER'S.

THE scenery between Lake Pepin and the St. Croix is not as lofty nor as picturesque as that we have already passed, but its interest is greatly enhanced by the greater number of Indians that we here meet. The Red Wing village is nearly midway between the two lakes mentioned, and contains about six hundred souls. A short distance from this village are two isolated mountains, whence may be seen a most magnificent panorama of the wilderness, and when viewed at sunset it presents more the appearance of dream-land than reality. These mountains from time immemorial have been used as the altars where Indian war parties have offered up their sacrifices, previous to going to battle. At the present time, however, their only inhabitants are rattlesnakes, which slumber on their sunny slopes or in the clefts of the rocks during the long summer. And thus is it throughout the world, in the wilderness as well as the city, death and the beautiful are ever linked together in an unbroken brotherhood.

I only remained at the Red Wing village one night, but such a night I hope never to pass again. An outcast of a trader had furnished the Indians with "fire-water," and the whole posse of them were ravingly mad, for spirituous liquor always makes the poor Indian miserably crazy. For want of a better place, I had to sleep in the cabin of this very trader. My bed was on the floor, while my host and his family occupied a couple of beds in opposite corners of the only room in the house. And such horrible yelling and screaming as I heard during the first half of that night, I can never forget. The noises were unearthly and

devilish. Now you might hear the clashing of knives, as some of the more desperate spirits came together in a fight; and now you might hear the sobbings and moanings of a miserable woman, as she exposed and mutilated her body, to perpetuate the memory of a dead husband or child.

But there was one incident which actually made my hair stand out like the quills of the porcupine. I should premise that the few white people of the wilderness never think of locking their doors at night; and also that the Indians of this region claim it as a privilege to enter and depart from your cabin whenever they please, and their intrusions are always looked upon as matters of course. It was somewhat after midnight, and the yelling of the savages had partly subsided. I had just fallen into a doze, when I was startled by the stealthy opening of our cabin door, and the tread of a muffled footstep. It was intensely dark, but I *knew* it was an Indian, and thought that somebody was about to be murdered. The object in the room made just noise enough to rack my brain, and then was perfectly still. I listened, and with hardly a particle of breath in my body,—I still kept listening,—until I actually fainted upon my pillow from excess of fear. Finally I slept, and my dreams were of blood, and blood only. The first peep of day, however, awakened me, when lo! directly at my side, flat on the floor, was a huge black Indian, breathing in his deep slumber like a porpoise. The first intelligence that I heard on going out of the door was, that one Indian had been killed during the night, and that another was at that moment in the agonies of death. As may be supposed, I left the Red Wing village with pleasure.

Lake St. Croix empties into the Mississippi, and its principal inlet is a river of the same name which rises in the vicinity of Lake Superior. This is the valley through which the traders and Indians have been in the habit of passing, for a century past, on their way from the western prairies to Lake Superior, and from the lake back again to the prairies. The river is only distinguished for one waterfall of uncommon beauty. The lake is about twenty-five miles long, from two to five wide, and surrounded with charming scenery. The water is clear but of a

rich brown colour, and well supplied with fish, of which the trout is the most abundant.

At the outlet of this lake, I visited another encampment of Sioux Indians, where I saw a noted chief, named Little Crow. He was a handsome man, but both his arms had recently been broken by a rifle ball, which was shot by one of his own brothers,—who was envious of his station as chief. As a punishment for his wickedness, Little Crow, in return, had ordered four bullets to be fired at his brother, which of course numbered him with the dead. I saw his new-made grave, and his youthful wife wailing over it, like one that was sorrowing without hope.

From St. Croix to St. Peter's, the banks of the Mississippi are steep, but only about one hundred and fifty feet in height. The river is here studded with islands whose shadowy recesses are cool during the hottest weather;—and a more delightful region for the botanist to ramble cannot be found elsewhere. The water is clear as crystal, and its bosom is generally covered with water-fowl, from the graceful snow-white swan to the mallard and wood-duck. Isolated Indian wigwams are frequently seen here, pitched on the margin of the stream, and at the foot of vine-covered precipices.

But there are three landscape views connected with this portion of the Mississippi, which I thought quite magnificent. I witnessed them all during a single afternoon, and in the light of a mellow sunshine. The first was a rolling prairie, that faded away to the western sky until its outline was actually lost in the hazy atmosphere. Not a solitary tree did I behold, but a sea of grass, that was delightfully relieved with flowers of every variety of shape and colour. Occasionally a breeze would pass across the scene, causing unnumbered tiny billows to quiver over the surface of mightier ones, which seemed to be careering onward to some unknown shore. Covering the foreground of this picture might be seen an immense flock of grouse, feeding, or chasing each other in sport; and then, an occasional prairie squirrel as it sat at the entrance of its hole; while in the middle distance, a robber wolf glided over one of the ridges of the prairie, with his form pictured against the sky. The lone, lost

feeling which possessed my heart, when I thought of the great prairie-world then lying before me, was composed of delight and melancholy, of confidence and tormenting fear.

Another picture which I witnessed from a commanding hill-top, was of an untrodden wilderness of woods, reaching to the extreme horizon on the north. Owing to my elevated position the forest-world appeared quite level, and, excepting one barren ledge, was without a single object to mar the monotony of the scene. On that ledge, however, with the aid of my glass I could just discern the dead body of a deer, with a black bear reclining at its side, as if sated with his feast; while in his neighbourhood were standing some thirty vultures in a state of delightful anticipation.

The other scene to which I alluded, was witnessed from the lofty bluff that fronts the mouth of the St. Peter's river. Far beneath my feet glided the majestic Mississippi;—on my right stood the handsome and commanding barracks of Fort Snelling, surmounted by the stars and stripes; on my left, the naked peak of the Pilot's Nob, with a cluster of trading-houses at its base; directly before me, winding away like a mighty serpent between a multitude of islands, lay the deep and turbid St. Peter's river; and far beyond—far as the eye could reach—the prairie land, whose western boundary is the Rocky Mountains.

The landscape was indeed glorious, and there was something to gratify my national pride in the flag that fluttered in the breeze; but when I thought of the *business* of that Fort and the *end* for which the people of the hamlet were living in the wilderness, the poetry of the scene was marred, and I longed to dive still deeper in the wild world which reposed so peacefully before me.

CHAPTER III.

FALLS OF ST. ANTHONY.

MOUTH OF THE ST. PETER'S RIVER.

The hamlet of St. Peter is at the mouth of the St. Peter's river, and at the head of steamboat navigation on the Mississippi. My sojourn here has been interesting from many circumstances. I feel that I am on the extreme verge of the civilized world, and that all beyond, to the ordinary traveller, is a mysterious wilderness; and every object which attracts my attention is made doubly entertaining by the polite attentions I receive from several gentlemen connected with Fort Snelling and the Fur Company.

In this vicinity I first saw an extensive encampment of Sioux or Dacotah Indians, who have, within six miles of the Fort, no less than three large villages. This, as is well known, is one of the most peculiar and savage tribes of the north-west, and as I happen to be here during their gala season, I have had an opportunity of being present at some of their feasts and games.

On one occasion it was announced throughout the village that the Indians were to have a Dog Feast, in which none but the bravest and most distinguished of the warriors are allowed to participate. The idea that lies at the bottom of this rite is, that by eating a dog's liver the heart is made strong. The feast took place on the open prairie, in the afternoon, and was attended by about one hundred men, while there must have been a thousand spectators. The first step in the ceremony was the Indians seating themselves in a circle around a large pole, and devoting a few moments to smoking. Their only article of clothing was the clout, and their only weapon a long knife, while their heads were decorated with death trophies, and their bodies encircled by a belt from which hung all the scalps the wearers had

taken. Suddenly a whoop was given, and the whole party commenced dancing to the monotonous music of a drum. Then broke upon the ear the howl, and in a moment more the dying groan of a dog from without the circle of dancers. The carcass was thrown into their midst by a woman. A chorus of deafening yells resounded through the air, the dog was immediately opened, his liver taken out, suspended to the pole by a string, and the dance resumed. A moment had hardly elapsed, however, before the dancers, one after another, stepped up and took a bite of the yet warm and quivering liver. Soon as this was all eaten, another dog was thrown into the ring, and the same horrible ceremony repeated; and so they continued until the carcasses of several dogs were lying at the foot of the pole in the centre of the dancing crowd. Another human howl ascended to the sky, and the feast was ended. All the while the river flowed peacefully onward, and the mellow sunlight bathed in its own hues the illimitable prairie.

I have also had an opportunity of witnessing in this region the Indian mode of playing ball. There is nothing exclusive in this game, and every male Indian who is sufficiently active may take a part therein It sometimes lasts for several days, and when I witnessed it, was played by two companies or bands, of about one hundred and fifty individuals each The balls used are formed of a deer-skin bag, stuffed with the hair of that animal and sewed with its sinews. The clubs are generally three feet long, and have at the lower end a sinewy netting, sufficiently large to hold the ball, and each player is furnished with one of these clubs. With these they catch and throw the ball, and though they are not allowed to touch it with their hands, it is sometimes kept from once touching the ground for a whole afternoon. The station of each party is marked by a pole, on a line with which the players stand, just before beginning the game. The poles are usually about five hundred yards apart. The ball first makes its appearance midway between the parties, to which point a most furious rush is made, and the object to be attained is, for the player to throw the ball *outside* his own line of standing.

The Olympic beauty of this game is beyond all praise. It calls into active exercise every muscle of the human frame, and brings into bold relief the supple and athletic forms of the best-built people in the world. The only *ornaments* worn are paint covering the body, which, with the usual exception, is entirely naked. At one time a figure will rivet your attention similar to the Apollo Belvidere, and at another, you will actually be startled by the surpassing elegance of a Mercury. The sole music that accompanies the game is a chorus of wild clear laughter. The only drawback connected with it is the danger of getting your legs broken, or the breath knocked out of your body, which are calamities that frequently happen.

There are not many particulars with regard to manners and habits wherein the Sioux Indians differ from their surrounding brethren. Living, as they mostly do, in a vast prairie region, their favourite and principal mode of travelling is on horseback, and, away from the larger rivers, you will find them possessed of the finest horses, which they love and protect with true Arabian affection. They are of course admirable horsemen, and very expert in hunting the buffalo. They are most cruel and vindictive towards their enemies, and have, from time immemorial, been at war with their neighbours of the north and west; and their hatred of the white man seems to be a cherished emotion of their nature. Physically speaking, they are a noble race of men and women, but universally considered as the Ishmaelites of the wilderness. Speaking of these Indians, reminds me of their pictorial historian, Captain Seth Eastman. This gentleman is an officer in the army, and an artist of ability. He is a native of Maine, has been in the service about eighteen years, and stationed at Fort Snelling for the last five. All his leisure time has been devoted to the study of Indian character, and the portraying upon canvass of their manners and customs, and the more important fragments of their history. The Sioux tribes have attracted most of his attention, although he has not neglected the Chippeways; and he has done much to make us acquainted with the Seminoles of Florida, where he was formerly stationed for several years. Excepting a few paintings, which he has occasionally

presented to his friends, all the rest are now in his possession, and it was my good fortune to spend many agreeable hours admiring their beauties. The collection now numbers about four hundred pieces, comprising every variety of scene, from the grand Medicine Dance to the singular and affecting Indian Grave. When the extent and character of this Indian Gallery are considered, it must be acknowledged to be the most valuable in the country, not even excepting that of George Catlin. But what adds greatly to the interest called forth by these pictures is the use to which they are to be applied. Instead of being used as a travelling exhibition to accumulate gold, this gallery is to be presented to a distinguished college, from which the artist will only demand the education of his children. There is something in this movement so foreign to the sordid passion of our age, and so characteristic of the true spirit of art, that the heart is thrilled with pleasure when we remember the American soldier-artist of the wilderness.

I have also had the pleasure of meeting at St. Peter's M. Lamarre Piquo, the distinguished French naturalist from Paris. He has been in the Indian country upwards of a year, and is to remain some months longer. He is on a professional tour, collecting specimens in every department of natural history, and for that purpose is constantly wandering along the rivers, through the woods, and over the prairies of the north-west, with no companions but Half-Breeds or Indians. He seems to be a most passionate lover of his science, and the appearance of his temporary store-room or museum is unique and interesting. Here an immense buffalo stares at you with its glassy eyes, while just above it, pinned to the wall, may be seen a collection of curious beetles, butterflies, and other insects; then an elk and a deer will display their graceful forms, while at their feet will be coiled up the rattlesnake, the adder, and other frightful serpents; here the otter, the beaver, the fox, the wolf, the bear, and other native animals; there a complete flock of web-footed creatures, from the wild swan and pelican to the common duck; here an eagle and hawk, a partridge and scarlet-bird; and there, embalmed in spirit, a vast variety of curious reptiles. M. Lamarre Piquo

belongs to that honourable class of scholars whose labours tend to develop the glorious resources of our country, and among whom we find such men as Wilson, Audubon, Silliman, and Houghton.

Among the natural beauties associated with St. Peter ought not to be forgotten Carver's Cave, the Cascade Waterfall, the Lakes, and the Pilot's Nob. The Cave is about four miles below, and was named after Carver, who was the first white man that explored it thoroughly; its Indian name however was Wahonteebe, which means Dwelling of the Great Spirit. The entrance to it is on the brink of the river, five feet high and about twice as wide; and the arch within is not far from fifteen feet high and twenty broad. The bottom is covered with sand, which slopes down to a lake of pure water, the opposite boundary of which has never been visited. On one of the inner sides, not far from the entrance, are several Indian hieroglyphics, partly covered with the moss of bygone centuries.

About two miles north of St. Peter there empties into the Mississippi a small river, named the *Laughing Water*, which is the parent of a beautiful waterfall. The stream is perhaps fifty feet wide, and after a wayward passage across the green prairie, it finally comes to a precipice of more than one hundred feet deep, and in an unbroken sheet discharges its translucent treasure into the pool below. So completely hidden by a mass of foliage is this fall, that you would pass it by unnoticed were it not for its ever-murmuring song.

The lakes in the neighbourhood of St. Peter, on the bosom of the prairie, number some four or five, the most conspicuous of which are Harriet and Calhoun. They are not deep, but clear, abound in fish, and are encircled by sand. The Pilot's Nob is a grass-covered peak, commanding a magnificent series of views. To the west lies a boundless prairie; to the north and south the fantastic valley of the Mississippi; and to the east a wilderness of forests and prairie, apparently reaching to the shores of Michigan. But let us pass on to the Falls of St. Anthony, which are a few miles above St. Peter.

These Falls are more famous than remarkable. They were first visited by Father Hennepin in 1689, who gave them their

present name out of respect to his patron saint. Their original name, in the Sioux language, was Owah-menah, meaning *falling water.* They owe their reputation principally to the fact, that they "veto" the navigation of the Upper Mississippi. They are surrounded with prairie, and therefore easily approached from every direction. The river here is perhaps half a mile wide, and the entire height of the Falls, including the upper and lower rapids, is said to measure some twenty-five or thirty feet, and they are consequently without an imposing feature. The line of the Falls is nearly straight, but broken near the centre by a large island, and just below this are no less than seven smaller but more picturesque islands, which are looked down upon by steep bluffs on either side of the river. For half a mile before the waters make their plunge, they glide swiftly across a slanting, but perfectly flat bed of rock; and after they have reached the lower level, they create a sheet of foam, as if venting their wrath upon the rocks which impede their progress; but in a few moments they murmur themselves to sleep, and then glide onward in peace towards the far distant ocean.*

They seem to be the grand headquarters for the eagles of the wilderness, which congregate here in great numbers. At one moment a hungry individual might be seen, struggling with a bass or trout, directly in the pure foam; and then another, with well filled crop, high up in heaven, would be floating on his tireless pinions. At another time, too, you might see a crowd of them hovering over the body of some floating animal which had lost its life while attempting to cross the upper rapids, and fearful indeed was the shriek of conflict between those warriors of the air.

Associated with the Falls of St. Anthony is the following Indian legend. A Chippeway woman, the daughter of a chief, and the wife of a warrior, had been cruelly treated by her faithless husband. She was not beautiful, but young and proud, and the mother of a lovely daughter-child. Goaded to the quick by repeated wrongs, she finally resolved to release herself from every

* These falls are seven miles from the hamlet of St. Peter, and geologists suppose that that was their original site.

trouble, and her child from evil friends, by departing for the Spirit Land, and the Falls were to be the gateway to that promised heaven. It was an Indian summer evening, and nature was hushed into a deep repose. The mother and her child were alone in their wigwam, within sight and hearing of the Falls, and the father was absent on a hunting expedition. The mother kissed and caressed her darling, and then dressed it with all the ornaments in her possession; while from her own person she rejected every article of clothing which she had received from her husband, and arrayed herself in richer garments which she had made with her own hands. She then obtained a full-blown lily, and crushing its petals and breaking its stem, she placed it on a mat in the centre of her lodge, as a memorial of her wrongs. All things being ready, she seized the child, hastened to the river, launched her frail canoe, and in a moment more was floating on the treacherous stream. According to a universal Indian custom, she sang a wild death-song,—for a moment her canoe trembled on the brow of the watery precipice, and in an instant more the mother and child were for ever lost in the foam below.

CHAPTER IV.

A RIDE ON HORSEBACK.

CROW-WING.

My mode of travelling from the Falls of St. Anthony to Crow-wing river was on horseback. I obtained my animal from a Frenchman, who accompanied me as guide. There was no regular road to follow, but only a well-beaten trail, which ran, for the most part, along the eastern bank of the Mississippi, where lie a continued succession of prairies and oak-openings. We were each furnished with a blanket, a small stock of bread and pork, ammunition and a gun. Our horses were young and fleet, and mine was particularly easy and graceful in his movements. The day was scorchingly hot; but I was so anxious to proceed that I ventured out, and by six o'clock we were on our winding way.

A few hours had elapsed without meeting with a single adventure, when I fixed my eyes upon my gun, (which then seemed to be about six times as heavy as when we started,) and began to wonder whether I was not in a fair way of illustrating Dr. Franklin's story of the whistle. But before I had a chance even to cast a look behind, I was startled by the report of my companion's gun, when lo! just in the shadow of a neighbouring thicket I saw a large buck make two frightful leaps, and then drop to the earth quite dead. In a very few moments the two hind quarters of the animal were enveloped in his hide, and strapped to my friend's saddle; the tune of my intentions was changed, and after taking a lunch of bread we continued our journey.

Our route, during the afternoon, lay over a portion of the prairie that was alive with grouse. My guide considered them unworthy game for his gun and skill, and left me to enjoy the sport alone. I had no dog to point them; but my horse was so

well trained to shoot from, that he answered very well as a substitute. I only had to ride into the midst of a flock, frighten them, bang away, and dismount to pick them up. And this was the manner in which I spent the "lucid intervals" of our frequent "halts," by way of *resting myself and keeping cool.* I do not desire to tell an unreasonable story; but I must say, that at sunset I had fastened to my saddle upwards of fifty prairie birds.

We were now on the margin of a handsome stream, in a natural meadow, and, as we found it necessary to feed and rest our horses, we gave them some water, hobbled them, and turned them at large. In the mean time we amused ourselves by cooking and enjoying a portion of our game, and that was my first supper in the wilderness. We roasted our meat on one stick, while just above it with another stick we melted a slice of pork, for the sake of its salty drippings. We despatched a comfortable quantity of venison, with an occasional mouthful of pork and bread, and used the brains, legs, and breast of a grouse for dessert. Our beverage consisted of the purest water, which we quaffed in a position approaching to the horizontal, though our heels were somewhat nearer heaven than our heads. We concluded our repast with an hour's snooze, and by the light of a thousand stars saddled our horses once more, and resumed our journey.

It was a cool, calm, cloudless night, and we were the only human beings on a prairie which appeared to be illimitable. I was informed, however, that a little speck that caught my eye far to the westward, was the cabin of an Indian trader, whose nearest neighbour, with one exception, was fifty miles off; also that the place was on the Mississippi, (which we had left for a time.) and was known as Little Rock. As I was a good deal fatigued, the poetry of that unique ride did not make much of an impression upon me. I tried to muster a little sentiment on the occasion, but, just as it was about to manifest itself in words, my head would suddenly drop upon my shoulder heavier than a clod; and like a feeble, flickering lamp, my senses would revive, only to be lulled again into a doze and nod. But this sleepy state of things was not to last for ever. It so happened that we discovered directly in our pathway a solitary wolf, which was

snuffing the ground as if on the scent of some feeble creature that would afford him a hearty feast. He was an ugly looking rascal, and called forth from my companion a bitter curse. At his suggestion we dismounted, and with our guns cocked, approached the wolf, using our horses as a kind of shield. We had approached within a reasonable shot of the animal, when it suddenly started, but seeing nothing but two horses, it paused, pricked up its ears, and seemed to be whetting its appetite for a supper of horse-flesh. In a moment, however, the signal was given, and the two heavy charges of our guns were lodged in the body of the wolf, which was at that instant supposed to be in a precarious condition; and, without stopping to see him die, we once more mounted our faithful ponies.

Our excitement having subsided, we gradually fell into a drowsy state, that was "heavier, deadlier than before." But from this were we also roused, and by the tramp or pattering of feet in our rear. We looked, and behold! a herd of wolves were coming towards us on the keen run. Our horses took fright and became unmanageable. The prairie devils were now almost upon us, when our horses actually broke loose, and away they ran over the plain. It was not long, therefore, before we left our enemies far out of sight, and early on the following day we reached the mouth of Crow-wing river. My companion with difficulty managed to retain his venison; but when I came to count my birds, I found only five remaining, the rest having unintentionally been left upon the prairie as food for the robbers of the wilderness.

CHAPTER XI.

CROW-WING.

CROW-WING.

THE spot thus designated is beautifully situated on the eastern side of the Mississippi, directly at the mouth of the river known by that name. It is here that the trader Allan Morrison resides, whose reputation as an upright, intelligent, and noble-hearted man, is coextensive with the entire wilderness of the north-west. He is a Scotchman by birth, somewhat advanced in life, and has resided in the Indian country for thirty-five years. He possesses all the virtues of the trader and none of his vices. He is the worthy husband of a worthy Indian woman, the affectionate father of a number of bright children, and the patriarch of all the Chippeway Indians who reside on the Mississippi. Around his cabin and two rude storehouses, at the present time are encamped about three hundred Indians, who are *visiting* him, and I am informed that his guests, during the summer, seldom amount to less than one hundred. And this is the place where I have passed ten of the most truly delightful days that I ever experienced. It is at this point that I am to embark in a canoe, with Morrison, (accompanied by his unique suite,) who is to be my counsellor and friend, while I wander, according to my own free will, over the lake region of the extreme Upper Mississippi.

Crow-wing is not only one of the most delightfully located nooks in the world, but it is rich in historical and legendary associations. A famous battle was once fought here between the Chippeways and Sioux. A party of the latter had gone up Crow-wing river for the purpose of destroying a certain Chippeway village. They found it inhabited only by women and children, every one of whom they murdered in cold blood, and

consumed their wigwams. It so happened that the Chippeway warriors had been expecting an attack, and had consequently stationed themselves in deep holes on a high bank of the river at Crow-wing, intending to fall upon the Sioux party on their way *up* the river. But they were most sadly disappointed. While watching for their enemies, they were suddenly startled by a triumphant shout that floated *down* the stream. In perfect agony they looked, when lo! the very party that they were after came into full view, shouting with delight and tossing up the scalps which they had taken. Many a Chippeway brave recognized the glossy locks of his wife or child, and knew his gloomiest anticipations to be true. They remained in ambush for a few minutes longer, and when the enemy camp within reach of their arrows, every single one of them was killed, while their canoes, plunder, and bodies were suffered to float down the stream unmolested; and the pall of night rested upon the hills, the glens, the waveless river, and the Chippeway camp.

Among the many legends associated with Crow-wing is one about a white panther, whose home was here when the world was young. That panther was the prophet of a certain Chippeway tribe, and had power to speak the Chippeway language. A young brave was anxious to revenge the death of a brother, and had sought the oracle to learn the success of his intended expedition. The panther told him that he must *not* go, but wait until a more propitious season. But the young man headed his party, and *went;* and every one of his followers was killed—himself escaping by the merest chance. Thinking that the panther had caused this calamity, he stole upon this creature and slaughtered it in the darkness of midnight. The dying words of the oracle were,—"Cruel and unhappy warrior, I doom thee to walk the earth for ever, a starving and undying skeleton!" And it is said that this spectre man, whenever the moon is tinged with red, or the aurora-borealis floods the sky with purple, may be seen flitting in solitude along the banks of the Mississippi.

Crow-wing is the Windsor of the wilderness, for it is the nominal home of the head chief of the Chippeway nation. His name is Hole-in-the-day, and I had frequent opportunities of

visiting him in his lodge. He is about sixty years of age, and a remarkably handsome man. He is stern and brave, but mean, vain, treacherous, and cruel. He was in the habit of resorting to the most contemptible tricks for the purpose of obtaining whisky, with which he always made a beast of himself. He was constantly in the habit of talking about himself, and exhibiting the official papers which he had received from the government in making treaties. The following was the most famous of his deeds, and one that he had the hardihood to boast of as something creditable. He and some six warriors, while on a hunting tour, were hospitably entertained in a Sioux lodge, where resided a family of seventeen persons. The two nations were at peace, and for a time their intercourse had been friendly. On leaving his host, Hole-in-the-day shook him cordially by the hand, with a smile upon his countenance, and departed. At midnight, when the Sioux family were revelling in their peaceful dreams, Hole-in-the-day and his men retraced their steps, and without a reasonable provocation fell upon the unprotected family, and cruelly murdered every member, even to the lisping babe. And it was in the lodge of this titled leader that I spent whole hours in conversation, and from whom I received a present, in the shape of a handsome red-stone pipe. It is indeed a singular fact, that the most interesting and intelligent nation of the West should be ruled by such an unworthy chief as Hole-in-the-day.

A word now about his household. He is the husband of two wives, who pursued, while I was present, their various avocations in studied silence. Each of them presented me with a pair of moccasins, and placed before me whole mocucks of maple sugar. In passing, I might remark, that when the Indians are hard pushed for flour or game, they will resort to their sugar, upon which they can live for days, and which they consider the most wholesome of food. The children that swarmed about the chief's lodge, I was unable to number. His eldest son and successor I frequently met, and found him to be quite a Brummel of the woods. The following story gave me a glimpse of his character. Some months ago, the idea had entered his head that his father was jealous of his increasing popularity among the *people*. He was seriously

affected by it, and in a fit of anger resolved to starve himself to death. His friends laughed at him, but to no purpose. He left his home, marched into the woods, and ascended a certain hill, (called Look-out hill, and used from time immemorial, by the Indians, as a point from which to watch the movements of their enemies ascending or descending the Mississippi,) where he remained four days without a particle of food. He was only rescued from death by the timely discovery of his friends, who took him away by force, and actually crammed some nourishment down his throat.

But my Crow-wing stories are not all related yet. I here saw *alive* and *quite happy*, a warrior who was once *scalped* in a skirmish on the northern shore of Red Lake. His enemies left him on the ground as dead, but, wonderful to relate, he gradually recovered, and is now as well as any body; but perfectly hairless, of course, and wears upon his head a black silk handkerchief. The summer after this event he was hunting buffalo in the Sioux country, when he had another fight with two Indians, both of whom he succeeded in butchering, and one of those men was the identical Sioux who had taken his scalp a few months before.

During my sojourn here, I have had frequent opportunities of witnessing the Indian mode of swimming. To speak within bounds, there must be some sixty boys at Crow-wing who enjoy a swim about every hour. When not in the water, they are hard *at work* playing ball, and all in the sweltering sunshine, with their ragged looking heads entirely uncovered, and their bodies almost naked. As soon as the child is loosened from its prison cradle, it is looked upon as a fit candidate for any number of duckings, which are about its only inheritance. These children are just as much at home in the water as a full-fledged duck.

They swim with great rapidity, always extending one arm forward like a bowsprit, and holding the other closely at the side. They are so expert in diving, that when a number are pursuing a particular individual, and that one happens to dive, the whole of them will follow after, and finally all rise a hundred yards off. To bring up a pebble from a hole twenty feet deep is looked upon as a very common feat. This art seems to be inherent in their

nature, and is the gift of a wise Providence;—for all their journeys are performed on the water, and their canoes are as frail as frailty itself. It is very seldom that we hear of an Indian being drowned.

The only Indian ceremony I have witnessed at this place, is called the Begging Dance. A large party of *bravè* warriors had come to pay their white father (Mr. Morrison) a *disinterested* visit; but as they were nearly starved, they said not a word, but immediately prepared themselves for the dance, that is universally practised throughout the nation. It was night, and all the people of Crow-wing were stationed in a large circle before Morrison's door; while one swarthy form held aloft a birchen torch, which completed such a picture as was never equalled upon canvass. The everlasting drum, and rattling of "dry bones," commenced their monotonous music; when the most ridiculously dressed man that I ever beheld, stepped out from the crowd and commenced dancing, keeping time with a guttural hum. Upon his head was a peaked woollen hat, and his flowing hair was filled and entangled with burs. On his back he wore the remnant of an ancient military coat, and on one leg the half of a pair of breeches, while his other propelling member was besmeared with mud. In one hand he held the empty skin of a skunk, and in the other the gaunt body of a dead crane. Immediately after this rare specimen, appeared in regular succession about twenty more dressed in a similar manner, and when all out, their dancing capers were even more uncouth and laughable than their personal appearance. The object of all this was to exhibit their abject poverty, and create an atmosphere of good-nature; and it was their method of asking Mr. Morrison for food. Soon as he had supplied them with flour and pork, they ceased dancing, seized the booty, and departed for their wigwams to enjoy a feast. On the following day, this band of gentlemen made their appearance, painted, and decked out in most splendid style, with the feathers, ribbons, scarlet leggins, and other ornaments which they had kept hidden until after the dance and feast were ended.

I have as yet accomplished but little in the way of hunting; that is, but little for this region. On one occasion I killed seven

fine *looking* ducks, which turned out, however, to be unfit to eat, as they were of the dipper species, and a little too fishy, even for my taste; at one time I killed twenty-five pigeons; at another about a dozen grouse; and last of all a couple of young coons. This latter game, I would remark, afforded me one of the most delectable of feasts.

But in the way of fishing, the waters about Crow-wing have treated me to some of the rarest of sport. The Mississippi at this point contains a great variety of fish of the mullet and sucker genus, but the only two desirable kinds are the muskalonge and a very large pike. I tried some of these with a fine hook baited with a frog, but I could not tempt them in that way. The *fashionable* mode of taking them is with a spear, by torchlight, and during half the hours of one night I performed the part of a devotee to fashion. My pilot was an Indian, and we went in a birchen canoe, using birch-bark for a torch. There were a number of canoes out that night, and the gliding about of the various torches, the wild shores, the ever-varying bed of the river, and my own occasional struggle with an immense fish, conspired to throw me into a nervous state of excitement which has not entirely left me at the present moment. I did think of mentioning the number of prizes that were taken on that memorable night, but my modesty forbids; I will only say that I saw extended on the shore a muskalonge that weighed fifty pounds, and a pike that almost weighed twenty-four.

Two miles east of Morrison's house is a little lake, some four miles in circumference, which is said to contain no other fish than black bass. My own experience tells me that this report is true. I angled along its sandy shores a number of times, and could take nothing but bass. They were small, weighing about a pound, dark green on the back, sides a brilliant yellow, and belly white. I took them with a fly, and found them delicious eating.

CHAPTER VI.

ELK LAKE.

IN MY CANOE.

ELK or Itasca Lake is the fountain head of the Mississippi. It is thought to be almost three thousand miles from the Gulf of Mexico, and two thousand feet above the level of the Atlantic. It is a small sheet of water, about five miles long, one to two miles wide, and contains only one island, which lies directly in the centre. The first traveller who visited the lake was Henry R. Schoolcraft, after whom the island has been justly named. On the south side is a ridge of wood-crowned hills, which give birth to tiny streams, that eventually empty their waters into the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The whole region on the north is woody, low, and marshy. The water is clear, deep, and full of fish; the bottom gravelly; and the entire shore covered with reeds and rushes. The trees which abound here are the pine, oak, elm, maple, birch, and poplar; and the fish are principally the trout, pike, and black bass. The Mississippi when it leaves this lake is only about twenty feet wide, but after passing through a great number of lakes it spreads itself to the width of one hundred and fifty feet, and falls into Red Cedar Lake. This portion of the Great River might well be likened to the infant Hercules, for it is the master of every thing around it, and rambles onward as if conscious of its dawning power. Upon the whole, however, it runs through a cheerless wilderness.

The region of Elk Lake was once famous for the number of its animals, and derives its name from the following legend of a mammoth Elk. This creature is said to have measured the length of two large canoes, and with his horns had power to split a pine-tree. His lair was in a valley among the neighbour-

ing hills, where he reigned supreme; and it was customary for all the animals of the north, which were of giant size in those days, to make him an annual visit. As they were so numerous, they were compelled to occupy the country for many miles around, which accounts for its excessive flatness. The object of this "world's convention" was to consult the king of beasts as to the forests and plains they were to occupy during the following year, and to partake of the water of the small lake, which had power to protect them from every disease or accident; and such was the state of things, when an enemy made its appearance, and the reign of the Emperor Elk was ended.

Those were the days when giants inhabited the earth, and the region where they most congregated was in the far South. It so happened that a hunting party of these people wandered to the North, and finally pitched their tents in the vicinity of this lake. Among the animals they succeeded in killing was the mammoth Elk, which they found asleep, and pierced with a poisoned arrow. The heavens were immediately filled with clouds, a heavy rain deluged the earth, and with their booty, in melancholy mood, the hunters started on their return. The rain was so abundant that the lake overflowed its banks, forming a little stream, which finally widened into a broad river, and emptied into an unknown sea; and on the bosom of this river did the hunters float in their newly-made canoes, until they found themselves in their own country. The conclusion of the whole matter was, that from that year all the animals of the earth began to dwindle in size, and the men of that time were reduced in stature to the height of their younger children.

A more suggestive legend than the above I have seldom heard. To my mind, it illustrates the poetical genius of the Indian, and throws much light upon the history of the Mound Builders. I obtained it from the lips of an old Indian hermit, as I sat in his solitary lodge, at the foot of one of the hills which look down upon Elk Lake.

On the summits of those hills I spent a number of days, pondering upon the strange wild scenery which surrounded me. At one time I revelled over a morning landscape. The sun had

just risen above an ocean of forests, and the sky was echoing with a thousand strains of melody. Earth was awake, and clothed in her fresh green garment. The mists had left the long low valleys, and revealed to the open sky winding rivers and lakes of surpassing loveliness. Every thing was laughing with joy under the glorious influence of the summer sun.

The elk and the deer, to my mind's eye, were cropping their morning repast, with the dew-showers trickling from their sides. Gracefully did the smoke curl upward from an Indian village. The hunters were preparing for the chase. I saw them enter their canoes, silently glide down a river, and finally lose themselves among the islands of a vast swamp. None were left in that village but women and children. While the former busied themselves in their rude occupations, the latter were sporting in the sunshine, some shooting at a target, some leaping, some swimming, and others dancing.

A rushing sound now fell upon my ear from a neighbouring thicket. It was a wounded moose, that had sought refuge from a hunter. The arrow had pierced his heart, and, like an exiled monarch, he had come here to die. He writhed and bounded in agony. One effort more, and all was still. The noisy raven was now to feed upon those delicately-formed limbs, and pluck from their sockets those eyes, which were of late so brilliant and full of fire. But after all, lovely, lovely indeed, was that morning landscape of the pathless wilderness.

At one time I gazed upon a noontide panorama. Not a breath of air was stirring, and the atmosphere was hot and sultry. The leaves and the green waves of the distant prairie were motionless The birds were tired of singing, and had sought the shadowy recesses of the wood. The deer was quenching his thirst in some nameless stream, or panting with heat in some secluded dell. On an old dry tree, whose giant arms stretched upward as if to grasp the clouds, a solitary bald eagle had perched himself. It was too hot even for him to enjoy a bath in the upper air; but presently, as if smitten with a new thought, he spread out his broad pinions, and slowly ascended to the zenith,—whence I fancied that the glance of his keen eyes could

almost rest upon the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. The butterfly and wild bee were resting on the full-blown flowers; and silence reigned in the Indian village. The children, exhausted with heat and play, had gone to lie down, some in their cabins, and some in the cool shadow of the trees. Earth and air were so tranquil, that it seemed as if nature was offering up a prayer. Winding far away to the south was the Mississippi, fading away to the bending sky.

Towards evening a cloud obscured the sky. The wind arose, and was followed by a roaring sound,—and now a storm was spending its fury upon forest and prairie. Loud thunder echoed through the firmament, and the fiercest lightnings flashed forth their fire. The forests were bending as if every tree would break. An old oak, which stood in its grandeur upon the plain, now lay prostrate. The parched soil was deluged with rain. But finally the storm spent its fury, and the clouds, like a routed army, were passing away in dire confusion. A rainbow then arched the heavens, and a fresh but gentle breeze was pleasantly fanning my cheek.

I also looked upon this wilderness landscape at a later hour. As the sun descended, the clouds came out to meet him, decked in their most gorgeous hues, while the evening star smiled at his approach He had left the valleys in twilight, and I knew that his last beams were gilding with gold the Rocky Mountains. The moon ascended to her throne, and the whippoorwill commenced her evening hymn. On heavy wings a swan flew past me; she was going perhaps to her home on the margin of Hudson's Bay. A stir was in the Indian village, for they had returned with their canoes loaded with game. The customary festival had commenced, and most strangely did their wild music sound, as it broke on the surrounding solitude. The doe had gone to her grassy couch, the feathered multitudes were sleeping, and night had fallen upon the world.

It was now midnight, and I stood in the centre of an apparently boundless wilderness of forests and prairies; while far away to the north-west reposed a range of hills, which seemed to me like a vast caravan of the antediluvian Mound Builders.

The moon had compassed the heavens, and was near her setting. A thousand stars were by her side. She flooded with her silver beams the leaves, the waves, and distant hills. Every voice within the Indian village was hushed. The warrior asleep upon his mat, was dreaming of a new hunting-ground; the youth, of the dark-eyed maiden whom he loved; and the child, of the toys of yesterday. The pale face had not yet trespassed upon their rights; and, as they were at peace with the Great Spirit, they were contented and happy. Deeply impressive was the hour. The wind was up, and, wailed an awful anthem as it swept through the dark pines. The owl was noiselessly flying from tree to tree, and the beautiful whippoorwill was sleeping. The splash of a leaping fish, or the howl of a wolf, were the only sounds which fell upon my ear. And when I retraced my journey from the summit of the Elk Hills and the margin of Elk Lake, few and brief were the words that escaped my lips, for my heart was oppressed by the wonders I had seen.

CHAPTER VII.

LEECH LAKE.

IN MY CANOE.

LEECH LAKE lies in the midst of a forest, mostly composed of pine, maple, oak, elm, and tamarack. It is supposed to be about forty miles in length, and perhaps twenty to twenty-five in width. Its shores are very irregular; it contains a number of large islands, and a trading post of some antiquity. It derives its name (Casagasque) from the story, that the first man who discovered it, saw in it a leech that was wider across the back than an ordinary Indian mat. It is deep and clear, has a sandy bottom and shores, and is far-famed for its white fish, though possessing almost every other variety in great abundance. Three of its most prominent islands are known by the names of the Goose, the Pelican, and the Bear. The first has a desolate appearançe, and is inhabited only by immense numbers of water-fowl; the second is noted for its fishing-grounds, and a certain species of the pelican said to be found only on its shores; and the third has a good soil, is thickly wooded, and somewhat cultivated by a tribe of Indians, who own the lake, and inhabit the surrounding country.

This tribe of people glory in the name of *Pillagers*, and fully deserve the name. If they happen to meet a stranger Indian, or trader, *each* one will unceremoniously help himself to an article that he likes, politely remarking that for *his* part he desires nothing more, after which they feed the unfortunate man well, but let him depart with nothing but a blanket or jacket. The Pillagers are a brave, proud, and warlike people, but, on account of their thieving peculiarity, are universally hated and feared. But they are good hunters, and pay more attention to agriculture than any other tribe in the nation.

During my stay at Leech Lake I had an opportunity of witnessing a Medicine Dance, and of obtaining some information with regard to the Medicine Society. It is a religious rite, and practised on a great variety of occasions. At this time the dance was given by a man who had lost a relative. The ceremony commenced at twelve o'clock at night, and lasted until the evening of the following day; and such a perfect mixture of ridiculous dancing, horrible yelling, and uncouth dressing, I never before witnessed, and never wish to witness again. It positively seemed as if all the more unearthly creations of Dante had been let loose upon the earth, and had sought the heart of the wilderness, to rejoice at their freedom, and portray the miseries of hell. I would, but cannot, adequately describe the scene, and I can only expect my more imaginative readers to obtain the faintest idea of its strange, strange appearance.

White men and Indians who have never been initiated into the mysteries of the Grand Medicine, are not allowed to be present during the first part of the celebration. From what I have seen and heard about it, I am convinced that it is nothing in the world but an Indian and *savage* species of Freemasonry. A Medicine man would sooner die than divulge the secrets of his order. The ceremony on the occasion above mentioned, was performed in the immediate vicinity of the deceased; while a conversation was carried on with the dead, and food placed by its side, as if it had been a living and hungry individual. Then it was that their medicine bags were taken out, and as each Indian has a certain medicine, or preparation which he supposes his skin to possess, he attempts to manifest its virtues on this occasion. By breathing into the nostrils of the skin, he imparts to it a particular charm, by which he can cure the sick or destroy his enemies. Hence the great fear that these conjurers inspire in all others. Medicine men support each other in every thing they may happen individually to require, even to the murder of an unfortunate child. When a man has passed the highest degree, he can command the services of his brethren for any purpose. The price of admission is six pieces for each grade, and there are eight grades. By one piece they mean a blanket, a

pair of leggins, a knife, a gun, or any other useful article. The man who gives the most expensive pieces is highly honoured, and can make the largest demands upon the society, so that the older members obtain a revenue for their former expenditures. When they wish to inform a distant lodge of the faithlessness of a member, they despatch a piece of tobacco; the guilty man is always known and never admitted, but when they prove true, their membership is inherited. The missionaries of the west are inclined to believe that this Medicine institution is the grand obstacle to the promulgation of the Christian religion among the Indians.

I also witnessed while at Leech Lake the *conclusion* of a ceremony that was commenced some weeks before. There had been a Virgin Dance, the prominent features of which are as follows. All the virgins of the village assemble together and seat themselves in a large circle. In the midst of this company are collected all the young men of the village, who dance for the amusement of the ladies. But if it so happens that one of the men stops suddenly and points his finger at a particular girl, she is at once looked upon as having lost her virginity; if the charge is substantiated the girl is disgraced, but if not, the young man must *die.* The *conclusion* that I alluded to was, the execution, in cold blood, of a fine-looking young man, who had attempted, without cause, to ruin the reputation of a girl by whom he had been rejected. In an unguarded moment he had been stabbed, and when I saw him, he was weltering in his blood. It was a most terrible exhibition of justice and cruelty, and made me partly admire and then utterly despise the character of the whole Indian race.

While at this lake a couple of trappers made their appearance from the Red River wilderness, where they had been hunting during the past winter, but owing to an accident had been detained from returning until the present time. They were half-breeds, and as wild a pair of beings as I ever beheld. Their furs, at the usual prices, would probably bring them some fifteen hundred dollars. Their place of destination was St. Louis, where each one had a wife and children. Their intention was to remain

with their friends until November, when they would dive into the wilderness again.

I only heard three legends at Leech Lake. One gives the origin of a certain miniature whirlpool, which may be seen on the south side. A couple of Chippeway women, while crossing in a canoe, were pursued by Sioux Indians, but the Lake Spirit, out of compassion for their misfortune, struck the water with his wings, and opened an easy pathway to the Spirit Land. The second story is about Pelican Island. It is said that no Indian ever visited it without being caught in a storm; and that it has for centuries been inhabited by strange people. They were never visible excepting from the main shore, for when the island was searched no tracks or wigwam-poles could be seen, nothing but rocks, grass, and reeds. At the present time, none but the bravest dare land upon its shore with their canoes.

The third legend that I heard connected with this lake, was about a famous battle once fought between the gods of the white man and the red man. A great many summers ago, a race of white people made their appearance on the shores of this country, and, as they were a strange people, the red men of the wilderness were disposed to love them. As the former were very poor, the latter presented them with a few acres of land to cultivate. As the white men increased in numbers, they craved more land, but the red men would not yield to their extravagant solicitations. In the mean time the strange people were becoming powerful. In process of time the Big Manito became displeased with them, and was determined that this usurpation should cease. He visited the white man's god, and told him that he must take back his ambitious children. The white man's god replied that he would do no such thing, but was determined to protect his own. Manito then told him that the question must be decided by battle. A famous battle was fought, and the white man's god triumphed. He took Manito prisoner, and tied him to an oak with hi kory saplings, but he finally made his escape, and with his children took up his home in the more remote wilderness.

The region of Leech Lake is somewhat famous for the quantity

and good quality of the original maize or Indian corn. When I was there it was not sufficiently advanced to be eaten, even in a green state, but I obtained a fact with regard to corn planting, which may be new to my readers. All the labour connected with the raising of corn is performed by the women, who take it upon themselves as an offset to the hardships endured by the men in hunting. It is customary for them after they have planted the seed, to perform, in a state of nudity, a nocturnal walk through the field, which ceremony is supposed to protect the grain from the destroying insect or worm.

During my stay at this lake, I received from my friend Morrison, the following facts with regard to the game now inhabiting this region. The black bear, the black and grey wolf, the elk, the moose, and the deer, the otter, the mink, porcupine, white fisher, fox, the coon, the martin, the rabbit, and a variety of squirrels, are as abundant as ever; the grisly bear and buffalo are found only occasionally; and the beaver is entirely extinct. Among the birds that I saw were eagles, fish-hawks, night-hawks, owls, loons, the swan, the crane, a great variety of ducks, the pigeon, the woodpecker, blue-jay, black and blue-bird, red-bird, and the king-bird; and among the fish that may be found in Leech Lake, are the white-fish, the trout, the pike, the pickerel, the bass, the sucker, and the mullet. It is said the white-fish of this lake originated from the brains of a woman; and I am also told that its shores have in times past yielded more wealth in the way of furs than any other place of the same extent in the north-west. But enough. It is time that I should close this desultory paper, else my reader will accuse me of practising the characteristic peculiarity of the *animal Leech.*

CHAPTER VIII.

SANDY LAKE.

ST LOUIS RIVER.

I NOW write from the margin of a stream which falls into Lake Superior, towards which I am impatiently pursuing my way. Sandy Lake, where ended my voyaging on the Mississippi, is one of the most famous lakes of the north-west. It lies only about three miles east of the great river, almost directly west from Lake Superior, and is about six miles long. Over the intervening route which connects the two water wonders of our country, more furs and Indian goods have been transported than over any other trail in the wilderness. The lake received its name from the French, on account of its sandy shores, which are remarkably beautiful, abounding in agates and cornelians. There is a trading post here, which is said to have been established ninety years ago; and in a certain log cabin which was pointed out to me, I was told furs had been stored to the value of fifty millions of dollars.

The shores of this lake are hilly, and being full of beautiful islands, it presents a most interesting appearance. The water is clear and abounds in fish, of which the black bass, the pike, and white-fish are the most abundant.

The voyager in pursuing this route always finds it necessary to make a number of portages. The original manner in which I performed one of these I will briefly describe.

When the company to which I belonged had landed on the eastern shore of Sandy Lake, I immediately inquired for the trail, seized my gun, and started on ahead, hoping that I might succeed in killing a few pigeons for supper. The path was well beaten, the scenery interesting, and I went on with a light heart

and a head full of fantastic images born of the wild forest. The only creature in the way of game that I saw was a large red deer, which suddenly startled me by a shrill snort, and bounded away as if in scorn of my locomotive powers. Soon as my *hair* was fairly settled to its natural smoothness on my head, (how very uncomfortable it is to be frightened!) the deer made a dignified pause, and I attempted to draw near by dodging along behind the trees.

Soon as I was through dodging, I looked up and found that my game was missing, and I therefore wheeled about to resume my journey. My intention was reasonable and lawful, but then arose the thought, what direction shall I pursue? The more I pondered the more my wonder grew, and, after a series of ineffectual rambles, I finally concluded that I had lost my way, and must spend the night, literally speaking, "in the wilderness alone." I now record my tale without a particle of emotion, but I can tell you that my feelings and reflections on that occasion were uncomfortable in the extreme.

After wandering about the woods until my feet were blistered, I concluded to pitch my tent for the night, although the only things I had with me to make me comfortable in my solitude, were an unloaded gun, a horn half full of powder, and my shot bag, empty of shot and balls. I happened to be in a deep valley, which was entirely covered with pine-trees. One of them had two large branches that shot out together about a dozen feet from the ground, and as I had no sure way of keeping off an enemy, I managed to climb up to them, and there spent the night, without once budging from my interesting roost.

I was not visited by any goblins on that memorable night, but the actual miseries which ministered to me during the dark hours were very numerous. In the first place, I had to watch the deepening shadows of the evening, tormented by hunger and thirst. Instead of having an opportunity to satisfy my own appetite, it seemed as if all the musquitoes of the wilderness had assembled together for the purpose of having a feast on my own flesh and blood. But nature granted me a brief respite from this torment, by causing a heavy shower to fall, which had a

tendency to cool my feverish lips and brow, and allowed me a lucid interval of sleep.

But this blessedness was soon ended; for in a fit of the nightmare I had a very narrow escape from falling to the ground. After I had fairly recovered myself, and again drank in the horrors of a musquito dirge, I almost made up my mind to drop at any rate, and thereby end my life and the enjoyment of my infernal enemies.

But there was soon another change in the character of my miseries. An immense owl had the impudence to perch himself on a limb above my head, whence he poured forth a flood of the most horrible screaming that mortal ever heard. Soon as the echoes thus awakened had melted into silence, a crackling sound fell upon my ear, and I beheld an old bear straggling along, as if he was sure of enjoying a feast of fresh meat.

He halted and snuffed around the base of a tree, which stood only a few yards distant from the one I occupied, and then continued on his way. He seemed to know that human feet had lately trodden the valley; but rationally concluding that no sensible man would remain in that particular region any longer than he could possibly help it, he did not trouble himself about the scent he had discovered. I felt grateful towards the old savage for his unintentional politeness; but if my gun had been loaded with only one ball, I should have favoured him with an unexpected salute.

The hours which followed this event, and preceded the dawn, were the longest that I ever experienced. My wretchedness was indescribable; I was cold and hungry, and in a perfect fever from want of sleep, and the insect poison infused into my whole body; but morning came at last, and with it the warm bright sunshine and the silence of the Sabbath; only a loud clear chorus of sweetest melody echoed through the pine forest valley, from the throats of a thousand feathered minstrels.

On descending from my elevated position, I ascended a high hill, from whose summit I could look down upon a beautiful lake, where I saw my fellow-travellers all quietly afloat in their canoes. I loaded my gun with powder and fired a signal, which

was answered by a shout, that was far sweeter to my ears at that particular moment than even the song of birds. When the Indians who had been hunting after me had returned, and when I resumed my seat in the canoe, and had a slice of cold pork between my fingers, I was quite happy, in spite of the many jokes cracked at my expense.

CHAPTER IX.

THE ST. LOUIS RIVER.

MOUTH OF THE ST LOUIS.

BY looking on the map you will observe that this river enters Lake Superior on the extreme west. I had not the means of ascertaining its precise length, but was told that above the savannah, where I struck it, it is an inconsiderable stream. From that point to the lake it is a majestic river, and I should suppose the distance to be nearly one hundred and fifty miles. It has more the appearance of a wild New England river than any other that I have seen in the western country. It is exceedingly rocky, and so full of sunken boulders and dangerous rapids, that it never could be made navigable further up than Fond du Lac, which is twenty miles from Lake Superior The water is perfectly clear, but of a rich snuff colour, owing probably to the swamps out of which it runs. It is said to rise and fall very suddenly. Its entire shores are without a solitary habitation (excepting at the trading post already mentioned), and the scenery is picturesque, wild, and romantic. But I hear the roar of its glorious cataracts, and must attempt a description of them.

There is a place on this river called the Knife Portage, from the fact that the rocks, of slate formation, are exceedingly sharp and pointed, where the stream forms a large bend, and where the voyager has to make a portage of twelve miles. The length of this bend may be sixteen miles, and in that distance the water has a fall of about three hundred and twenty feet. The width of the river may be from three to four hundred yards. At this point (just above Fond du Lac) are three nameless waterfalls, whose aggregate dimensions are indeed stupendous. The water of one tumbles over a pile of pointed rocks, and after twisting

itself into every possible variety of falls and foaming streams, finally murmurs itself to sleep in a pool eighty feet below the summit whence it takes its first leap.

The principal fall, or rather cataract, is nearly one hundred feet high, and the water at times rushes over almost in a solid and unbroken body.

The walls of slate on either side are lofty, and "crowned with a peculiar diadem of trees;" and as the roaring of the fall is deafening, its effect upon me was allied to that of Niagara. The pools at the bottom appeared to be black and fathomless, but the spray was whiter than snow, and the rainbows beautiful beyond comparison. When I gazed upon the features of this superb water-wonder, united as they were in one complete picture; when I listened to the scream of the eagle mingling with its roar, and thought of the uninhabited wilderness in every direction around me, I was deeply impressed.

I visited this cataract accompanied by a party of Indians, and, owing to the length of time it took us to reach it, we were compelled to spend the night in its immediate vicinity. We built our watch-fire on the southern shore, in a sheltering bay, about one hundred yards from the highest leap, and on a spot where we could command a complete view of the superb picture.

Our supper on that occasion was composed exclusively of venison, as one of the party had succeeded in killing a deer in one of his morning excursions; and though I had not eaten for nine or ten hours, I seemed to have lost my appetite, and took my food merely as a matter of necessity. After our repast was ended, two of the Indians lighted their birchen torches and jumped into a canoe for the purpose of spearing fish. I watched them with peculiar interest, and saw them perform one feat which was truly wonderful. They had wounded an immense pike on a shoal, very near a column of the falling element, when the stricken creature floundered away into the foaming water, and the canoe darted on in quick pursuit, as if its inmates were determined to capture or die. One moment it seemed as if the torrent of water must be pouring into the canoe, and the torches be extinguished, and then again, I could only see a halo of light, looking like the sun rising

at midnight, as the fishermen glided behind a sheet of water or a cloud of spray. They were successful in their sport, and finally returned and laid their prize at my feet. The party then enjoyed a pipe for about twenty minutes, when the younger Indians commenced playing their favourite moccasin game, and I spent the remainder of the evening conversing with the chief and patriarch of the band, from whom I gathered the following tradition respecting the cataract.

"More moons ago than I can count," said the old man, "the country lying between the big lake (Superior) and the place where the sun goes down, was owned by the Sioux nation, which was then immensely powerful. They were very cruel in their warfare, and did every thing in their power to annihilate the Chippeway nation. The Great Spirit was not their friend, but ours; and once, when a multitude of their warriors were pursuing some of our hunters down the river, the Great Spirit suddenly *kicked out the bottom* in this place, and the principal enemies of our nation were all destroyed. Since that time we have been the possessors of this vast country, and the children of our ancient enemies catch the buffalo in a far distant prairie land."

With this legend deeply impressed on my mind (the telling of which occupied my companion for nearly two hours) I ordered more wood to be placed on the fire, and leaving the others to take care of themselves, rolled myself in my blanket, and was soon asleep. I was awakened only once during the night, and that was by the distant howl of a wolf, mingling with the solemn anthem of the cataract. I sat up for a moment to look upon the scene, but the sky was covered with clouds, and it was exceedingly dark. Even the embers of our watch-fire had ceased blazing. Around me lay my companions in a deep sleep. Once more did I listen to that dreadful howl, and that godlike voice of many waters, until, like a frightened child, I hastily covered my head and went to sleep. On the following morning we resumed our journey in the midst of a rain storm; the memory of that night and that cataract, however, haunting me like a dream.

Another perpendicular fall within the bend I have mentioned, is some two miles down the stream, and is only about fifty feet

in height, but its grandeur is somewhat enhanced by the rapids which succeeded it, and which have a fall of some forty or fifty feet more. An old trader tells me that I am the first traveller from the states who has ever taken the trouble actually to visit these cataracts. If this is a fact, and as the Indians, so far as I can learn, have never christened them, I claim the privilege of giving them a name. Let them, then, be known hereafter as the Chippeway Falls. It is a singular circumstance that a pine-tree might be cut in this interior wilderness, and if launched in one of the tributaries of the Mississippi, or in the St. Louis river, and propelled by favourable winds alone, could, in process of time, be planted in the hull of a ship at any seaport on the globe.

The navigable portion of the St. Louis, as before remarked, extends only about twenty miles from the lake, at which point is the place legitimately called Fond du Lac. It is an ancient trading post, and contains about half a dozen white inhabitants, viz., a worthy missionary and his interesting family. The agent of the Fur Company and his assistants are half-breeds, and a most godless set of people they are. It is a general rendezvous for several Indian tribes, and when I was there was quite crowded with the barbarians.

Fond du Lac, so far as the scenery is concerned, is one of the most truly delightful places that I ever met with in my life. The first white man who traded here was the father of my friend Morrison, after whom the highest hill in the vicinity was named. Upon this eminence I spent a pleasant afternoon, revelling over a landscape of surpassing loveliness. Far below me lay an extensive natural meadow, on the left of which was a pretty lake, and on the right a little hamlet composed of log cabins and bark wigwams. The broad valley of the St. Louis faded away to the east, studded with islands, and protected on either side by a range of high wood-crowned hills, beyond which reposed in its conscious pride the mighty lake-wonder of the world. The atmosphere which rested upon the whole scene seemed to halo every feature, and with the occasional tinkling of a solitary cow-bell, combined to fill my heart with an indescribable pleasure.

Most of my rambles about this place were performed in com-

pany with the missionary already mentioned. He informed me that the surrounding country abounded in rich copper ore, in agates and cornelians of the first water, and that all the smaller streams of the country afforded rare trout fishing. If this end of Lake Superior should become, as I doubt not it will, famous for its mines, Fond du Lac would be a most agreeable place to reside in, as it is easily reached by vessels. I was hospitably entertained by this gentleman, and could not but contrast the appearance of his dwelling with that of his neighbour, the French trader. In the one you might see a small library, a large family Bible, the floor covered with matting, &c., a neat, tidy, and intelligent wife and children, in the other, a pack of cards, a barrel of whisky, a stack of guns, and a family whose filthiness was only equalled by the total ignorance of its various members. And this contrast only inadequately portrays the difference between Christianity and heathenism.

I left Fond du Lac about daybreak, with a retinue of some twenty canoes, which were freighted with Indians bound to a payment at La Pointe. It was one of those misty summer mornings when every object in nature wears a bewitching aspect, and her still small voice seems to whisper to the heart that it is not the "whole of life to live, nor the whole of death to die," and when we feel that God is omnipotent and the mind immortal. But the scenery of this portion of the river is beautiful—beautiful beyond any thing I had imagined to exist in any country on the globe. The entire distance from Fond du Lac to this place, as before mentioned, is not far from twenty miles. The river is very broad and deep, and completely filled with wooded islands, while on either side extends a range of mountains which are as wild and solitary as when brought into existence.

Every member of the voyaging party seemed to be happy, and we travelled at our ease, for the purpose of prolonging the enjoyment of the voyage. At one time we landed at the base of a cliff, and while I made a drawing or ransacked the shore for agates and cornelians, and the young Indians clambered up a hillside for roots or berries, the more venerable personages of the party would sit in their canoes, quietly puffing away at their

pipes as they watched the movements of their younger companions. Ever and anon might be heard the report of a gun, or the whiz of an arrow, as we happened to pass the feeding-place of a flock of ducks, the nest of an eagle or raven, or the marshy haunt of a musk-rat or otter. Now we surprised a couple of deer swimming across the river, one of which the Indians succeeded in capturing; and now we hauled up our canoes on a sandy island, to have a talk with some lonely Indian family, the smoke of whose wigwam had attracted our attention, rising from between the trees. Our sail down the river occupied us until about ten o'clock, when we reached the mouth of the river, and disembarked for the purpose of preparing and eating our breakfast. We landed on the river side of a long sandy point, and, while the Indians were cooking a venison steak and a large trout, I rambled over the sand hills, and as the sun came out of a cloud and dissipated every vestige of the morning mist, obtained my first view of Lake Superior, where, above the apparently boundless plain I could only discover an occasional gull wheeling to and fro as if sporting with the sunbeams.

CHAPTER X.

RECOLLECTIONS OF MICHIGAN.

ON THE RIVER RAISIN.

MICHISAWGYEGAN is the Indian name for the state of Michigan, and the meaning of it is, the Lake Country. It is my native state, and as I have recently visited it after an absence of more than a dozen years, and as it is not yet entirely redeemed from its original state of nature, it is meet, I ween, that I should, while within its borders, wind up my echoes of the wilderness. This is the country where I spent the morning of my days,—the theatre where my future character in the drama of life was formed and first acted out. Remote from the glitter and noise of the great human world, I used to wander alone through its dark forests, and bathe in its pure streams, without a care or thought to mar the peacefulness of life. A thousand words, now full of meaning, and familiar to my ear, were then but unmeaning sounds. Those were the days when I sported on the lap of nature, feeling it to be a luxury to breathe. Will they ever return? Ask that evening breeze whether it will ever again cool the fevered brow of that dying man? But very dear to me are my recollections of Michigan, and I would not part with them for the treasures of the world.

The character of its scenery and people is as original as its situation. Almost surrounded by water, it possesses all the advantages of an island, while at the same time it is but a small portion of a vast whole. Its streams are numerous and clear, but generally sluggish. A portion of the extreme north is uninhabited by human beings, owing to its barrenness. Huge granite mountains here loom upward in eternal solitude; sometimes presenting the appearance of having been severed asunder,

and scattered around by some mighty convulsion of nature. On the borders of the cold and desolate lakes thus formed, the crane and bittern rear their young. Occasionally, on the brow of some jutting crag, may be discovered the meagre hut of some poor Indian. Perhaps a barbarous anchorite, to whom the voice of his fellow-man is a grating sound, and to whom existence is but a mist, a dream; or it may be some disgraced warrior, who has been banished from friends and home, to dwell in this dreary solitude, with no companions but a half-starved dog, rugged pines, and frowning rocks. But this section is said to contain the richest copper mine in the known world.

The surface of the western half is destitute of rocks, and undulating; and it is here that the loveliest of lakes, and streams, and prairies are to be found. Lake Michigan, the second in the world, is its western boundary. The eastern portion is entirely original in its appearance, possessing many beauties peculiarly its own. It is so level and low, that a stranger, approaching it from Lake Erie, is often surprised to find himself in port, while in the act of looking out for land. This shore is watered by the Huron, St. Clair, and Erie.

No one, who has never witnessed them, can form any idea of the exquisite beauty of the thousand lakes which gem the western part of Michigan. They are the brightest and purest mirrors the virgin sky has ever used to adorn herself. Their banks are frequently dotted by human dwellings, the humble though comfortable abodes of a sturdy yeomanry. That one which takes its name from an Indian called Baubeese, and which is the outlet of the St. Joseph river, I will match against any other of its size in the world.

Notwithstanding what has been so often said by the artificial inhabitants of cities, concerning the hardships and ignorance of the backwoodsman's life, there is many a stout heart, exalted mind, and noble soul, whose dwelling-place has been for years on the borders of these very lakes. I know this to be true, for I have slept beneath their roofs, and often partaken of their johnny-cake and fat quails. No,—no. I love these men as brothers, and shall always frown upon that cit or dandy who sets down aught against them,—in malice or in ignorance.

Some of these little lakes smile in perpetual solitude. One of them is before me now. It is summer. The sun is above its centre. Deep and dark and still are the shadows of the surrounding trees and bushes. On the broad leaf of a water-lily a green snake is coiled up, with his head elevated, and his tongue gleaming in the sunlight. He is the enemy of all flying insects and little birds, and if you watch him a moment longer you will see one of them decoyed to death by the power of his charm. Hush! there is a stir among the dry leaves. It is but a lonely doe coming to quench her thirst. Is she not the Queen of Beauty? There she stands, knee-deep in the water, looking downwards, admiring the brightness of her eyes and the gracefulness of her neck. How Leigh Hunt would enjoy a ramble here! His favourite flowers,—the rose, the violet, the lily, and the sweet-brier, would each sing him a song more sweet and delicate than their first. What bright hue is that in the middle of the lake? It is but the reflection of

——"a vapour in the sky,
Thin, white, and very high."

A great proportion of Michigan is covered with white-oak openings. Standing on a gentle hill, the eye wanders away for miles over an undulating surface, obstructed only by the trunks of lofty trees,—above you a green canopy, and beneath, a carpet of velvet grass, sprinkled with flowers of every hue and form.

The prairies are another interesting feature of Michigan scenery. They meet the traveller at every point, and are of many sizes, seeming often like so many lakes, being frequently studded with wooded islands, and surrounded by shores of forests. Their soil is a deep black sand. Grass is their natural production, although corn, oats, and potatoes flourish upon them. Never can I forget the first time I entered White Pigeon Prairie. Sleeping beneath the shadows of sunset, as it was, the effect upon me was like that which is felt on first beholding the ocean,—overpowering awe. All that the poet has said about these gardens of the desert, is true.

Burr-oak Plains. The only difference between these and the oak openings, is the character of the trees and the evenness of

their surface. The soil is a mixture of sand and black loam. They have the appearance of cultivated orchards, or English parks; and, on places where the foot of the white man has never trod, a carriage and four could easily pass. They produce both wheat and corn.

The wet prairies have the appearance of submerged land. In them the grass is often six or seven feet high. They are the resort of water-fowl, musk-rats, and otters.

But the best and most fertile soil in Michigan is that designated by the title of timbered land. It costs more to prepare it for the plough, but when once the soil is sown it yields a thousand-fold. And with regard to their beauty and magnificence, the innumerable forests of this state are not surpassed by any in the world, whether we consider the variety or grandeur of their productions.

A friend of mine, now residing in western Michigan, and who once spent several years in Europe, thus writes respecting this region:—

"O, such trees as we have here! Magnificent, tall, large-leafed, umbrageous. Vallombrosa, the far-famed Vallombrosa of Tuscany, is nothing to the thousand Vallombrosas here! A fig for your Italian scenery! This is the country where nature reigns in her virgin beauty; where trees grow, where corn grows; where men grow better than they do any where else in the world. This is the land to study nature in all her luxuriant charms, under glorious green branches, among singing birds and laughing streams; this is the land to hear the cooing of the turtle-dove in far, deep, cool, sylvan bowers; to feel your soul expand under the mighty influences of nature in her primitive beauty and strength."

The principal inland rivers of Michigan are, the Grand River, the Kalamazoo, the St. Joseph, the Saginaw. and the Raisin. The first three empty into Lake Michigan, and are about seventy miles apart. Their average length is about two hundred and fifty miles, and they are about thirty or forty rods in width. At present they are navigable about half their length for small steamboats and bateaux. Their bed is limestone, covered with

pebbles. I was a passenger on board the *Matilda Barney*, on her first trip,—the first steamer that ever ascended the St. Joseph, which I consider the most perfectly beautiful stream that I have ever seen. I remember well the many flocks of wild turkeys and herds of deer, that the "iron horse" frightened in his winding career. The Indian canoe is now giving way to the more costly but less beautiful row-boat, and those rivers are becoming deeper and deeper every day. Instead of the howl of the wolf, the songs of husbandmen now echo through their vales, where may be found many comfortable dwellings.

The Saginaw runs toward the north, and falls into Lake Huron,—that same Huron which has been celebrated in song by the young poet, Louis L. Noble. This river is navigable for sixty miles. The river Raisin is a winding stream, emptying into Lake Erie, called so from the quantity of grapes that cluster on its banks. Its Indian name is Numma-sepee, signifying River of Sturgeons. Sweet river! whose murmurs have so often been my lullaby, mayest thou continue in thy beauty for ever.

Notwithstanding the comparative newness of Michigan, its general aspect is ancient. The ruin of many an old fort may be discovered on its borders, reminding the beholder of wrong and outrage, blood and strife This was once the home of noble but oppressed nations. Here lived and loved the Algonquin and Shawnese Indians; the names of whose warrior chiefs—Pontiac the proud, and Tecumseh the brave—will long be treasured in history. I have stood upon their graves, which are marked only by a blighted tree and an unhewn stone, and have sighed deeply as I remembered their deeds. But they have gone,—gone like the lightning of a summer day!

It is a traditionary land. For we are told that the Indian hunters of old saw fairies and genii floating over its lakes and streams, and dancing through its lonely forests. In these did they believe, and to please them was their religion.

The historian* of this state thus writes, in alluding to the olden times: "The streams rolled their liquid silver to the lake, broken only by the fish that flashed in their current, or the swan

* James H. Lanman, Esq., uncle to the Author.

that floated upon their surface. Vegetation flourished alone. Roses bloomed and died, only to be trampled by the deer or savage; and strawberries studded the ground like rubies, where the green and sunny hillsides reposed amid the silence, like sleeping infants in the lap of the forest. The rattlesnake glided undisturbed through its prairies; and the fog, which hung in clouds over its stagnant marshes, spread no pestilence. The panther, the fox, the deer, the wolf, and bear, roamed fearless through the more remote parts of the domain, for there were none to dispute with them their inheritance. But clouds thickened. In the darkness of midnight, and silence of the wilderness, the tomahawk and scalping-knife were forged for their work of death. Speeches were made by the savages under the voiceless stars, which were heard by none save God and their allies; and the war song echoed from the banks of lakes where had never been heard the footsteps of civilized man."

Then followed the horrors of war; then and there were enacted the triumphs of revenge. But those sounds have died away; and those deeds are traced only on the page of history. The voice of rural labour, the clink of the hammer, and the sound of Sabbath-bells now echo in those forests and vales. The plough is making deep furrows in its soil, and the sound of the anvil is in every part. A well-endowed University, and seminaries of learning are there. Railroads and canals, like veins of health, are gliding to its noble heart. The red man, in his original grandeur and state of nature, has passed away from its more fertile borders; and his bitterest enemy, the pale face, is master of his possessions.

The French were the first who settled in Michigan, and at as early a date as 1620, and for many years, they and the Indians were the sole inhabitants. Here it was that the far-famed Jesuit missionaries first pitched their tents in (what is now) the United States. Now, people out of every civilized nation dwell within its borders. Detroit, on the superb river of that name, and Frenchtown, on the river Raisin, were both founded by the French. The former of these is a city, a flourishing city, of fifteen thousand inhabitants, where are to be found all the elegancies and luxury of the most polite society. Its principal

street would be an ornament in any city; its elevation is some fifty feet above the water, and from its docks, the eye wanders over a scene not unlike that visible from the North River side of the Empire city. Like most cities, it appears to the best advantage in winter. Then it is that you may often witness the beautiful Detroit river frozen like marble, and on its surface hundreds of sleighs and skaters gliding in every direction, while a chorus of bells comes faintly and sweetly to your ear. Monroe, is the modern name for Frenchtown It is situated about two miles from Lake Erie, and is also a flourishing town, containing some four thousand inhabitants, a goodly portion of whom are the descendants of the early settlers Detroit and Monroe, are two of the best wheat markets in the western country. Ann-Arbor, on the Huron, is the New Haven of Michigan, and possesses many attractions in the way of intelligent people, picturesque scenery, and handsome buildings. Niles, on the St. Joseph, is a most difficult place to pass *through*, for the traveller always feels an irresistible impulse to remain there for ever,—it is so charmingly situated, on such a charming stream, and inhabited by such charming people. But I might sing this song under the head of Kalamazoo, Ypsilanti, Tecumseh, Adrian, Pontiac, Grand Rapids, Jackson, Battle Creek, and twenty other thriving villages, which are all surrounded by a fine agricultural country. I cannot now dwell upon such themes. Numma-sepee is ringing in my ear, and my thoughts are with my body, on the river, and in the village, where I was born. Here I am, after an absence of many years, a visiter, and to half the people a stranger, on the very soil where I spent my wild and happy boyhood. I will not touch upon the improvements that meet me at every turn, nor upon the troops of friends that surround me; my heart is with the village of other days, not with the business city of the present time; and as to my friends, I thank them for their kindness, but they are not of my kindred; they are changed, and I can only look upon them as strangers. Reader, as you love to remember the sunny days of your own life, I invite you to listen to my words, as I attempt to summon from the past an array of my most dearly-cherished recollections.

Judging from the many accounts I have heard, the spot now occupied by Monroe must have been, before the last war, one of the most delightful nooks in the wide world. Its original name, as before stated, was Frenchtown, and its only inhabitants were French, who had emigrated thither from France by the way of Canada. The families did not number more than about fifty, and the names of the most conspicuous were Navarre, Duval, Beaubien, Bourdeaux, Couture, Nadeau, Bannac, Cicot, Campau, Jobien, Godfroy, Lasselle, Corsenau, Labadee, Durocher, Robert, Lacroix, Dausette, Loranger, Sancomb, and Fourniet. They inhabited what might be called an oasis in the wilderness. Their farms all lay directly upon either side of the river, and though principally devoted to agricultural pursuits, they were content with but a few acres of cleared land, and beyond these, on either hand, stood the mighty forests in their original solitude and luxuriance. Along their doors glided the ever-murmuring Raisin, whose fountain-head was then among the things unknown, and its waters mingled with those of Erie, without being disturbed by the keel of any steamboat or white-winged vessel. Comfort and beauty characterized their dwellings, and around them grew in great abundance domestic trees, that yielded the most delicious fruits. In their midst stood a little chapel, overgrown with ivy and surmounted by a cross, where the Jesuit missionaries or Catholic priests performed their religious duties. The soft-toned bell that summoned them to worship, was not without its echoes, but they dwelt far away upon the sleeping lake or in the bosom of the surrounding wilderness. Here the tumult of the great human world was never heard, and money and fame were not the chief desire of the secluded husbandman, for he was at ease in his possessions. Indians, the smoke of whose wigwams ascended to heaven on every side, were the only people with whom the early settlers had intercourse; from them they obtained valuable furs, by barter, which they sent to Montreal, receiving in exchange the necessaries and many of the luxuries of life. They maintained the habits which were brought from the provinces whence they emigrated. The gentleman preserved the garb of the age of Louis XIV., while the peasant wore

a long surtout, sash, red cap, and deer-skin moccasins. Their knowledge of agriculture was very limited, and the policy of the fur trade was calculated to keep down the spirit of improvement in that respect. Of corn and wheat they were anxious only to raise enough to last them during the year. A surplus of any thing but furs they did not desire, and never possessed. Their grain was ground in windmills, whose picturesque features added to the poetry of their scenery. Their amusements were confined to the sound of the violin, at their unaffected assemblies.

The forest afforded them an abundance of game, which constantly led them to the hunt, and their beautiful stream abounded in fish, which they captured with the net, the hook, and the spear. A dreamy summer atmosphere seems to rest upon this region, when viewed in the light of the olden times. There was poetry in every thing which met the eye: in the priest, with cowl and satin vestments, kneeling before a wooden cross, on his way to the place of prayer; in the peasant, as he performed his rural labours, attended by his wife and playful children; in the rude Indians, with fantastic costumes, who were wont to play their uncouth games on the greensward, or perform their dexterous feats in the bark canoe; in the sky, which smiled perpetually upon the virgin wilderness; and in that wilderness, whose peculiar features verily blossomed as the unplucked rose. And there was poetry in all that fell upon the ear; in the lowing of the cattle, and the tinkling of their bells; in the gentle flowing waters, and the sound of the summer wind, as it sported with the forest trees, and wandered away, laden with the perfume of nameless flowers; in the singing of unnumbered birds, which ascended to the skies in a perpetual anthem; and in the loud clear laugh of French and Indian children, as they mingled together in their simple games. But those patriarchal days are for ever departed! In another part of the country, Tecumseh and Pontiac were beginning to figure in successive battles against the United States, and their hostile spirit soon manifested itself upon this frontier. The Indians upon this river became the enemies of the settlers, which event turned out to be the prelude

to a storm of war that scattered death and desolation along its path. But many years have fled since then, and the blessings of peace and prosperity are now resting upon our country.

The poor Indians have almost withered from the land, and those French inhabitants, like all things earthly, are on their way to the land of forgetfulness. Another race of men succeeded here, and can be numbered by thousands; and where once extended the dominion of the wilderness, a business city now looks down upon the river, which has become an adopted servant of commerce.

I cannot refrain from here quoting the following passage from Charlevoix, descriptive of the scenery as it existed when he passed through this region in seventeen hundred and twenty-one:

"The first of June, being the day of Pentecost, after having sailed up a beautiful river (the Raisin) for the space of an hour, which has its rise, as they say, at a great distance, and runs betwixt two fine meadows, we passed over a carrying place of about sixty paces in breadth, in order to avoid turning round a point which is called Long Point. It is a very sandy spot of ground, and naturally bears a great quantity of vines. The following days I saw nothing remarkable, but coasted along a charming country, hid at times by disagreeable prospects, which, however, are of no great extent. Wherever I went ashore, I was enchanted by the beauty and variety of a landscape, terminated by the noblest forests in the whole world. Add to this, that every part of it swarms with water-fowl. I cannot say whether the woods afford game in equal profusion. Were we all to sail, as I there did, with a serene sky, in a most charming climate, and in water as clear as that of the purest fountain; were we sure of finding every where as secure and agreeable places to pass the night in, where we might enjoy the pleasures of hunting at a small expense, breathe at our ease of the purest air, and enjoy the prospect of the finest of countries, we might be tempted to travel to the end of our days. How many oaks represented to me that of Mamre! How many fountains put me in mind of that of Jacob! Each day a new situation, chosen at pleasure, a neat and commodious house built and furnished with

all necessaries in less than a quarter of an hour, and floored with a pavement of flowers, continually springing up on a carpet of the most beautiful green;—on all sides simple and natural beauties, unadulterated and inimitable by art."

In this region I spent my wild and wayward boyhood. In the prime of summer I have watched for pigeons on the margin of the forest springs; in the strangely beautiful autumn and Indian summer, I have captured the squirrel and partridge; and in the winter the turkey and the deer. Reader! have you ever, while roaming in the woods bordering a prairie, startled from his heathery couch a noble buck, and seen him dart from you, "swift as an arrow from a shivering bow?" Was it not a sight worthy of a purer world than ours? Did you not hail him "king of the beautiful and fleet?"

There is one hunting incident which I met with when about fourteen years of age, that I can never forget. I had entered upon a cow-path, and as it led through so many and such beautiful places, I forgot myself and wandered on until the shadows of evening warned me of my situation. Great oaks and hickories, and walnut-trees, were with me wherever I went. They cast a spell upon me like that which is wrought by the old of other days. The black night came at last, and there I was, alone, and lost in that silent wilderness. Onward still did I continue, and even in my great fear was at times startled by the flapping of an owlet's wing, or the howl of a wolf. The stars were above, shining in their brightness, but invisible to me, so closely woven were the tops of the trees. Faintly glimmering in the distance, I saw a firelight, and on coming near, found a party of Indians encamped. My breast panted with excessive fear, and yet I could not speak—could hardly breathe, and still my mind was free and active. I stood and listened to the faint sound of a distant waterfall. Would that I had power to express the emotions that came like a flood pouring into my soul. Covered by a blanket, and pillowed by a mocuck of sugar, each Indian was asleep upon his rush-mat. Parents, children, and friends, promiscuously disposed, though all of them with their feet turned toward the expiring embers. The dogs, too, looking

ferocious and cunning as wolves, were all sound asleep. I stole softly into the midst of the wild company, and covering myself with an old blanket, strange to say, I slumbered. When morning came, and the Indians discovered a pale-faced boy among them, their astonishment can be more easily conceived than described. I at length informed them by signs that I was lost, and that my home was in the village of Monroe. I partook with them of a hearty breakfast, composed of venison, hommony, and water, and ere the sun had mounted high, was on my way homeward, with an Indian for my guide. As we parted on the outskirts of the village, I offered to pay him for his trouble, but he declined receiving any thing. I turned round, and the thick forest shielded him from my sight. Of course my friends were much concerned at my absence, and the majority of them insisted upon my having been drowned. For one whole week after this adventure, I was compelled to stay at home; but after that it was forgotten, and I was in the forests again.

But my heart-song of other days is just beginning, and I cannot yet drop my pen. My father's residence was upon one of the old French farms, that were once so famous for their Arcadian beauty. The hand of improvement has despoiled them of their original glory, and the strange, gaudy scenes that I now behold, only tend to oppress my spirit with gloom. The city dwellings around me I cannot see, for my mind is upon the village of my birth. The farm alluded to above, was about half a mile in width, and extended back to the distance of nearly two miles. Leaving the river and going back, you first pass through an orchard containing four or five hundred trees. Here a row of splendid pear-trees, and there a regiment of old black apple-trees, staggering under their weight of fruit. Entering a little enclosure behind a barn, you might see fifty small light-green trees, with an innumerable number of rosy cheeked peaches under their leaves. And now we pass the great cider-press, where I was wont to imbibe the rich American wine through an oaten straw. A little further on, we come to a green pasture, where there are cows, oxen, sheep, and horses grazing; onward still, and a wheat-field, yellow as gold, bowing before the breeze. Then our path

lies across a pleasant meadow, watered by a sparkling stream; and after a brief walk we find ourselves in the forest, dark and gloomy. And such *was* the spot where I spent the morning of my days. Is it strange, then, that a deep and holy love for nature should be rooted in my heart?

That description reminds me of another hunting expedition, of which I would merely give an outline. It is early morning, and the latter part of spring. Breakfast is ended. My cap and buckskin shirt are on, the latter gathered round my waist by a scarlet worsted belt. My powder-horn and shot-pouch are filled with the nicest kind of ammunition, and in my hand is my valued little gun (bought expressly for myself), polished bright as a sunbeam. I have kissed the baby, and am now on my winding way. At the mouth of the river, I borrow a canoe of some old Frenchman who resides there. If I were to offer him pay he would not accept it; for the interesting reason that he "knows my father."—All the day long have I been hunting, and revelling in a dream land of my own. The sun is in the west, and I am hungry. I have paddled around many a green and lovely island, and explored many a bayou and marsh, and outlets of creeks; frightening from her lonely nest many a wild-duck and her brood. My shot-pouch is now empty, although the bottom of my canoe is covered with game. There are five canvass-backs, three teals, three plovers, two snipes, one wood-duck, and other kinds of waterfowl. The canoe is drawn up on shore, and with my thanks I have given old Robert a couple of ducks. My game is now slung upon my back, and I am homeward bound, proud as a young king. While passing through the village (for I have to do so), I hear a voice exclaiming, "Lally! Lally!" I approach, and find my father and several other gentlemen seated at the post-office door talking politics. Each one in turn gives me a word of praise, calling me "quite a hunter." I pay them for their kindness on the spot, by the donation of a canvass-back, and pass on.

That evening my supper is a rare enjoyment, for some of the ducks have been cooked under the especial charge of my mother. A little longer, and I am in the land of dreams. Many, very

many such days have I enjoyed, but now they are far from me.

Fishing is another art in which I was considered an adept. When the first warm days lured the sturgeon and muskalonge from their deep home in the bosom of the lake, to ascend the Raisin, I was always among the first on the large platform below a certain milldam (now all washed away), with spear in hand and heart to conquer. Many a noble sturgeon, six and seven feet long, have I seen extended on the shore. As for *me*, I only *aimed* at the smaller ones. Once, however, my spear entered the back of a "*whopper*," and my determination to keep hold was nearly the cause of my being drowned. It must have been a thrilling, yet a ridiculous sight, to see me a-straddle of the fellow, and passing down the river like lightning. I think if Mr. William Shakspeare had been present, he would have exclaimed. —"Lo, a mer-*man* on a *sturgeon's* back!" If I could enjoy such sport now with the feelings of my boyhood, I would willingly risk such a ducking every day. But I am now a struggler amid the waves of life. O, how many long and never-to-be-forgotten Saturday afternoons have I mused away on the margin of my native stream. How many perch, and bass, sun-fish, and pike, and pickerel, have I brought from their pure element to place upon my father's table! But those days are for ever departed, all and for ever—gone into their graves, bearing with them all my dreams, all my hopes and fond anticipations. Desolate indeed does it make my heart, to look upon the changes that have taken place in the home of my boyhood. Kind words do indeed fall upon my ear, but I *feel* myself to be a stranger or as one forgotten. O, I *am*

> "A homeless wanderer through my early home;
> Gone childhood's joys, and not a joy to come!"
>
> *Dana.*

But let me, while I may, recall a few more bright visions from the past.

Ay, even now into the chambers of my soul are entering an array of winter pictures, associated with the times of the days of old.

True as memory itself, by every thing that meets the eye of my fancy, I perceive that winter has asserted his empire over my native village. Once more am I a bounding and happy boy, and planning a thousand excursions to enjoy the merry season. The years, between the present and that happy time, are vanished into forgetfulness, and it seemeth to me that I am even now panting with the excitement of a recent battle in the snow.

Last night, so my fancy tells me, there was a heavy fall of the white element. This morning, while walking along one of the streets of the village, a snowball hit me on the back, whereupon I jumped into an attitude of defiance. Partly hidden by a neighbouring fence, I discover a group of roguish boys, whom I immediately favour with an answer to their salute. Eight is the number of my temporary enemies, and as they leap the fence and come into full view, my heart begins to quail, and I feel a scampering sensation in my *heels*. Just in the "nick of time," however, half a dozen of my friends happen to come to my relief, when a couple of shouts ascend to heaven, and the battle commences. Round, hard, swiftly thrown, and well-aimed are the balls that fly. Already, from many a window, fair and smiling spectators are looking upon us, and each one of us fancies himself to be another Ivanhoe. The combat deepens. One fellow receives a ball directly in the ear, and away he reels "with a short uneasy motion." And then, as a stream of blood issues from the nose of one, and the eyes of another are made to see stars, maddening frenzy seizes upon the whole gang—the parties clinch,—and the "rubbing" scene is in its prime, with its struggles and sounds of suffering. One poor fellow is pitched into a snow-drift, heels over head, while his enemy almost smothers him with hands-full of soft snow, causing his writhing countenance to glisten with a crimson hue; another, who had been yelling at a tremendous rate over a temporary triumph, is suddenly attacked by a couple of our party, who pelt him furiously, until he cries out most lustily—"I beg, I beg," when he is permitted to retire with his laurels. One chap receives a stinger of a blow between his peepers, accompanied by an oath, whereupon we know that there is too much passion in the fray, and while the victims

enter upon a regular fisticuff, we find it necessary to run to their rescue and separate them. Thus the general battle ceases. After coming together, declaring ourselves good friends, and talking over the struggle, we collect our scattered caps, mittens, and tippets, and quietly retire to our respective homes.

Time flies on,—we have had a protracted rain, the streets have been muddy, the people dull,—but now fair weather cometh out of the north, and the beautiful river Raisin is again sheeted in its icy mail. For a week past great preparations have been made by some two dozen boys for a skating excursion to a certain lighthouse on Lake Erie, situated about ten miles from Monroe. We have seen that our skates are in first-rate order, and Tom Brown (an ancient negro, who was the "guide, counsellor, and friend," of every Monroe boy) has promised to awaken us all, and usher in the eventful morning by a blast from his old tin horn; so that when bed-time comes, we have nothing to do but say our prayers and enjoy a refreshing sleep. Strange that I should remember these trifling events so distinctly! But there they are, deeply and for ever engraven on the tablet of my memory, together with thousands of others of a kindred character. Their exalted mission is to cheer my heart amid the perplexities of the world.

It is the break-of-day, and bitter cold. The appointed signal hath been given;—the various dreams of many a happy youth are departed; each one hath partaken of a hearty breakfast, and the whole party are now assembled upon the ice "below the bridge." Then follows the bustle of preparation. While some are tardy in buckling on their skates, others slap their hands together to keep them warm, while some of the smartest and most impatient *rogues* are cutting their names, or certain fantastic figures, as a prelude to what we may expect from them in the way of fine skating. Presently we are drawn up in a line to listen to the parting words of "Snowball Tom." At the conclusion of his speech, a long and loud blast issues from the old tin horn, which we answer by a laugh and a louder shout, and like a band of unbroken colts, we spring to the race upon the icy plain. Away, away, away! Long and regular are the

sweeps we take, and how dolefully does the poor river groan as the ice cracks from shore to shore, as we flee over its surface "like a rushing mighty wind!" Keen, and piercingly cold is the morning breeze, but what matter? Is not the blood of health and happy boyhood coursing through our veins? Now we glide along the shore, frightening a lot of cattle driven to the river by a boy; or the horses of some farmer, who is giving them their morning drink; now we pass the picturesque abodes of the Canadian peasantry, partly hidden by venerable trees, though now stripped of their leafy honours; now we give chase to a surprised dog returning from the midnight assassination of some helpless sheep; now we pass the last vestige of humanity upon the river, which is the log cabin of an old French fisherman and hunter; and now we pass a group of little islands, with a thick coating of snow upon their bosoms, and their ten thousand beautiful bushes and trees *whispering* to the air of the surrounding silence. Already have we more than measured the distance of two leagues outside of Pleasant Bay, and our course is now on the broad bosom of Lake Erie, with an unbroken field of solid ice before us far as the eye can reach. The frozen pavement along which our skates are ringing, is black as the element beneath, and so transparent, that where the water is not more than ten or twenty feet in depth, we can distinctly see sunken logs, clusters of slimy rocks, and herds of various kinds of fish, balancing themselves in sleep or darting about their domain in sport. But these delicious pictures are for some other time,—we are speeding with the breeze and cannot tarry. Away,—away,—away!

But what means that sudden wheel of our leader, as with his voice and upraised hands he summons us to halt? Half a mile on our lee, and about the same distance from the shore he has just discovered an assembly of men, with their horses and sleighs at a stand, as if preparing for a race. Without a moment's hesitation we decide to be "on hand," and in a few minutes are cutting our capers in the midst of a hundred Canadians, who are about to enjoy what we predicted. Beautiful and fantastic carrioles are here, drawn by sleek and saucy-looking Canadian pacers, and occupied by hard-fisted men enveloped in their

buffalo-robes, whom we recognize as friends. Here we notice one Beaubien, with his pony of glossy black, which has never yet been beaten, and are told that the race is to be between him and an entire stranger, who has accepted a recently-made challenge. To the stranger we turn, and find his horse to be a beautiful bay, and of a more delicate build than the Canadian champion. The race is to be two miles in length, and the amount of the bet five hundred dollars. All things being ready, the competitors move slowly to the starting-place with their witnesses, while the concourse of people await in breathless anxiety the result of the race. Hark! hear you not the clattering of hoofs, resounding far over the plain, as if in search of an echo? Ay, and with wondrous speed they are coming! How exciting is the scene! In three minutes more the contest will be ended. See!—Beaubien is ahead, and the victory undoubtedly his! But now the stranger tosses up his cap, and as it falls, the flying pacer understands the signal—he increases his already almost matchless speed, he passes the Frenchman with a look of triumph in his eye,—one minute more,—and the unknown is triumphant. Most unexpected is the result. The people are bewildered and perplexed, but when Beaubien delivers up the lost money, not a word escapes him, and he seems to be broken-hearted. His darling steed has been eclipsed, the *swiftest* pacer in all the country does not belong to him, and he is miserable. The sport ended, and not caring for the jabbering of a band of excited Frenchmen, we come together again, and continue on our course.

Another hour do we while away along the lake shore, now pausing to get a little breath, and now gazing with curious eyes into the gloomy forest (which comes to the very water's edge) as we glide along. At twelve o'clock we have reached the desired haven, our feet are gladly released, and we are the welcome guests of mine host of the lighthouse. By some, the peculiar features of the lonely place are examined, while others, who have an eye for the grand in nature, ascend to the top of the lighthouse for a view of the frozen lake—reposing in unbroken solitude. The curiosity of all being satisfied, we assemble in the comfortable parlour of our entertainer, Mr. Whipple, and await

the dinner-hour. A jolly time then follows;—many a joke is cracked, and many a twice-told legend of the wilderness related; a sumptuous dinner is enjoyed; the evening hours approaching, we begin to think of home, and by the time the heavens are flooded with the light of the moon and stars, we have taken our departure, and are upon our skates once more. Without meeting with a single accident, elated by many a gay song on our way, and with our thoughts mostly bent upon the "spacious firmament on high," we glide over the frozen wave, and at the usual hour are in our warm beds, anticipating a dream of those things for which our several hearts are panting.

Hardly a week has elapsed before we have another heavy fall of snow, and the principal topic of conversation among the young people of the village is a sleigh-ride. The boys, about this time, are making themselves wonderfully useful in their fathers' stables, taking good care of the horses, examining the sleighs, collecting the buffalo-robes, and polishing the bells; while the girls are busily engaged upon their hoods, cloaks, muffs, and moccasins, and wondering by whom they will be invited. The long wished-for day has arrived. Farewell's Tavern, ten miles up the river Raisin, is our place of destination. The cheerful sun is only about an hour high, when there is heard a merry jingling of bells in the village streets. Our cavalcade numbers some half-dozen well-filled sleighs, and one single-seated carriole occupied by Abbé Somebody and the Chief Marshal of the expedition,—the writer of this rhapsody.

My black trotter was never in finer spirits, and it is as much as I can do to hold him in, as with his neck beautifully arched he bears upon the bit. He seems to know that his youthful master has but one dearer friend upon earth, who is the "bonnie lassie" at his side. Many and tender are the words then spoken, and the wide world before our youthful fancies is the home only of perpetual pleasures. Far, very far from our minds are all the stern realities of life. We hear the flail of the industrious farmer in his barn, but do not dream of the great truth that mankind are born to labour and grow old with trouble. We look upon a poverty-stricken and forsaken Indian, with his family, trudging

across the snowy landscape, and gratefully reflect upon the comforts of our own homes, and sigh for the miseries of the poor. Youth makes us forgetful of the *real* future, and the dawning of love opens our hearts to every tender influence, and we resolve, hereafter, to be very kind to the unfortunate. The shades of evening are descending upon the earth, and with thoughtfulness we gaze upon the quiet pictures of the road, the season, and the hour. We pass a wooden cross with its covering of snow, which was planted by Jesuit missionaries a century ago, and think of Him whom we have been rightly taught to worship and adore. Farmers are foddering their cattle, boys are carrying in huge armsful of dry hickory for a roaring fire, and cheerful lights are gleaming from the windows of the farm-houses as we pass along. Finally, the comfortable dwelling where we would be meets our gaze, seeming to smile upon us, with its various lighted windows, and clouds of smoke ascending heavenward, when, with a few flourishes of whips, and a terrible din of bells, the sleighing party comes to a halt before the tavern of friend Farewell.

The upper rooms of the dwelling are all ready for our reception, and while the girls are ushered into them, the boys are attending to the comforts of their faithful horses. In due time, after we have arranged the preliminaries for supper, we join the girls again, and in solid body make our appearance in the spacious ball room. A musician is already there, in the person of an ancient negro, who tells us that his fiddle is in prime order. But *dancing* is an idea of which we had not dreamed, for we are utterly ignorant of the polite accomplishment. But music we are resolved to have, and doubt not but it will greatly add to our enjoyment of the various games which we purpose to play. Now have the happy voices of the party risen to a noisy height, as we take hold of hands and commence the game of Drop the Handkerchief, while many a race around the slippery floor is run, and many a sweet kiss is given and returned. Then succeeds the play of Button, wherein the forfeits are redeemed by making "wheelbarrows," "measuring tape and cutting it off," and by "bowing to the wittiest, kneeling to the prettiest, and kissing the one we love best." Then the stories of the Stage-Coach have their

turn, which create a perfect tumult of laughter. After which we have Blindman's Buff, and one poor creature after another is made to grope about the room in Egyptian darkness. Such are the plays, with many more of like character, which we enjoy, while our sable friend is straining away at his old fiddle, as if determined to be heard above the surrounding clamour of talking, laughing, and singing voices.

The supper hour having arrived, a general adjournment takes place, when the unnumbered good things of the table are appropriated to their legitimate use. Half an hour is then allotted to the young ladies to get ready, and by nine o'clock the sleighs are at the door, and after a delightful ride of an hour in the clear moonlight, we are at our village homes, and the memory of our sleigh-ride commences its existence.

One, two, and perhaps three weeks have I been confined at school, when the notion pops into my head that I must go a-hunting, for my sporting friend, Francis Bannac (a Frenchman), has told me that game is now quite abundant. My father has granted me his permission, and Bannac tells me that I may be his companion on a tramp of nine miles to the head waters of Plum Creek. A pack of wolves, of whose depredations we have heard, are the principal game we have in view. Having finished the usual preliminaries of a winter hunt, and arrayed ourselves accordingly, we seize our rifles, whistle to our greyhounds, and with the sun midway up the heavens start upon the tramp. A walk of twenty minutes brings us to the edge of the forest, where we strike an ancient Indian trail and proceed on our way. A gorgeous landscape-panorama is that through which we are passing, and ourselves, I ween, the most *appropriate* and *picturesque* figures that could be introduced. Foremost is the tall and sinewy person of Bannac, with a snugly-fitted buckskin garment tightened round his waist by a wampum belt, cowhide moccasins on his feet, coonskin cap on his black head, pouch and powder-horn, together with knife and tomahawk, at his side, and in his right hand a heavy rifle. Next to him trotteth the deponent, who might be looked upon as a miniature Bannac, with variations,—while a little in our rear are the two hounds playing with each other, or

standing still and looking among the trees for game. All around us is a multitudinous army of forest soldiers, from the youthful maple or ash, to the rugged and storm-scathed oak or bass-wood; and marvellously beautiful to my mind is the tracery of their numberless branches against the blue sky, though my friend would probably liken those very tree-tops to the head of some "loafer" that had never made use of a comb. The earth is covered with a thick coating of dead leaves, with here and there a little island of snow. Now we perceive a beautiful elm lodged in the giant branches of an old walnut, like a child seeking consolation in the arms of its father; and now we come to a deformed beech tree, prostrate upon the earth, with its uncouth roots wasting to decay, and the idea enters my mind that such will eventually be the destiny of all falsehood. The woods in winter are more [illegible]. The green leaves are no longer here to in[illegible] a portion of their happiness, as they "clap their hands" [illegible], and the joyous birds of summer are not here to make [illegible] in [illegible] hearts, as well as ours. True, that mosses of varied hue [illegible] on every side, and in their love enveloping [illegible] trunks, and branches, yet they remind us of the pall and shroud. What footsteps do we hear, and why do the hounds start so suddenly? We have frightened a noble buck; but a moment has elapsed and he is beyond our reach. The hounds, however, are close behind him already, and the three are bounding away in splendid style, illustrating to perfection the poetry of motion. We fancy that the race will be a short one, and therefore start in pursuit, managing to keep in sight of our game. Heavens! what a leap was that over those fallen trees! but the hounds have done their duty, and the course is once more clear. A lot of ravens far up in the upper air seem to be watching our movements, as if hoping for a meal of venison, — and a grey eagle flies screaming across our path, as if to mock us for being without wings. Glossy black squirrels peep out of their holes in wonder at the commotion, and a flock of wild turkeys which we have alarmed, are running from us in great confusion, like a company of militia before a cavalcade of horsemen. But see! the buck has turned upon his pursuers, and

while they are battling together we have time to approach within gun-shot. Quicker than thought Bannac raises his rifle, a sharp report follows, a bullet has dropped the forest king, and he must die. We skin him, secure the two hams, and after examining our compass, and finding that we are near our place of destination, shoulder our plunder as best we may, and make a bee-line for the log cabin of our intended host, where we arrive in due time, and exchange friendly congratulations.

Well, now that we are here, I must give a brief description of the man whose guests we are, and of the lonely place which he inhabits. Like my bachelor friend, Bannac, Antoine Campau is a Frenchman and a hunter, but a widower, and the father of two little girls, and a strapping boy of fifteen. A singular love of *freedom* first prompted him to leave the settlement where he once lived, and to locate himself in the woods, where, between a little farming and a good deal of hunting, he manages to support himself and family quite comfortably. His dwelling is a rusty-looking log-house, situated on a pleasant little stream, in the centre of a dead clearing some three acres wide. The live stock of this embryo farm consists of a cow, one yoke of oxen, a pony, a few sheep, about three dozen hens, and a number of foxy-looking dogs. And now that the long winter evening has set in, and as the whole family is present, I will picture the interior of our cabin. The only room, excepting the garret, is an oblong square, twenty feet by fifteen. The unboarded walls, by the smoke of years, have been changed into a rich mahogany brown. The only light in the room is that which proceeds from an immense fireplace, where nearly a common cart load of wood is burning, and hissing, and crackling, at its own free-will, so that the remotest corners are made cheerful by the crimson glow. The principal articles of furniture are a bed, one large table standing in the centre of the floor, and some half dozen rush-chairs, while in one corner stand a number of shot-guns and rifles, and a ladder leading to the loft, and from the rafters above are hanging pouches, powder-horns, leggins, a brace of wild-ducks, one or two deer-hams, and a bundle of dressed skins. The dogs of the family, numbering only four, together with their

dandy visiters, are scattered about the room,—one lying upon the hearth and watching the fire, one playing with his shadow, another walking thoughtfully across the floor, and the other sound asleep. A bountiful supper having been prepared by the daughters, the whole family, with their guests, are seated at the table, and all past sorrows and future anxieties are forgotten in the enjoyment of the passing hour. Bannac and Campau have all the talking to themselves, as they have to relate their manifold adventures and wonderful escapes, wherein they make use of no less than three languages—bad French, broken English, and genuine Potawattomee. The leisure hour following supper is devoted principally to the cleaning of our rifles, the moulding of bullets, and other matters preliminary to the capture of a few wolves.

For the novel mode which we are to pursue on this occasion we are indebted to our friend Campau, and he tells us it will positively prove successful. From his account, it appears that only a few evenings ago his sheep were attacked by the wolves, and before he could run to their rescue, one of them was killed, but the thieves were compelled to part with it, or run the risk of losing their lives. To-day Campau has built a large pen, in which he has placed the dead sheep as a kind of bait. His idea is that the wolves will of course revisit this spot to-night, and when they are in the act of climbing over into the pen, we, who are to be hidden within gun shot, will give them the cold lead. Behold us, then, at the midnight hour in our treacherous ambush.

Listen! Hear you not the dismal shriek of an owl? Our enemies must be coming, for their footsteps have disturbed the feathered hermit, as he sat upon a limb with a red squirrel in his claw. Yes, there they are, the prowling thieves, just without the shadow of the wood, dodging along between the blackened stumps of the clearing. There are five of them, and see! with what activity they leap into the fold! Now is our time to settle them. We rush forward with a shout, when the villains commence a retreat, and as they mount the high enclosure, we succeed in shooting three, while the other two escape unharmed. The dead culprits having been stripped of their hides, their carcasses are carried away and exposed for food to the vulture

and eagle. We then return to our cabin and sleep until late in the morning, when we are surprised to find that a regular snow-storm has set in. Our sporting for to-day, which was to have been of a miscellaneous character, is given up, and Bannac thinks it better that he and I should turn our faces homeward in spite of the storm. Whereupon, after a good breakfast, we take leave of our hospitable friends, and through the falling snow enter the forest on our return.

Snow, snow, snow!—above us, around us, and under our feet, to the depth of some half-dozen inches. In large feathery flakes it falls downward through the still air, and it also muffles our footsteps as we tramp through the pathless and desolate woods. Every thing that meets the eye is enveloped in a downy covering: not only the prostrate and decayed tree, but the "topmost twig that looks up at the sky." Slowly and heavily, without game, or a single adventure, we are compelled to trudge along, and when we come in sight of the pleasant village, not a penny care we for any thing else in this world but a roaring fire and a warm supper,—both of which, in my father's dwelling, are we presently permitted to enjoy,—and thus endeth another portion of my heart-song.

Among the peculiar characters which I remember, while thinking upon my early days, none do I dwell upon with more pleasurable feeling than an old Indian. My first acquaintance with him took place when I was about twelve years old. It was the pleasant summer-time. At an early hour of the day I had launched my little birch canoe from the sloping bank behind our orchard, and, accompanied by Rover, started on a duck hunt down the river Raisin. I would here remark, that the mouth of this beautiful river is studded with islands, and has been, from time immemorial, celebrated for its abundance of game. As I paddled along, I watched with an inward joy the progress of the morning. The farm-houses, that had been long sleeping amid the silence of night, were now enlivened by their inmates, who had sallied forth to perform their allotted duties. At one moment my ears were saluted by a chorus of voices from some neighbouring poultry-yard, mingled with the lowing of cows and the jingling of

bells in the sheepfold. And then I heard the singing of larks in the open fields, the neighing of a horse, or the shout of some happy boy. The mists, frightened by the sunbeams, were rising from the river, and from the trees on either side the dew was falling. I looked upon the changing landscape, smiling in its freshness, and felt my heart swell within me, for I beheld the glory and goodness of God, and I "blessed him unaware."

The ducks were very shy that day, and the few that I did shoot were taken on the wing. I was about making up my mind to return home, when I beheld a single canvass-back rise from the water in the distance, and, seemingly unconscious of my presence, fly directly over my head. I fired at it, and the feathers flew. Slowly, but surely, the bird descended, and at last fell upon an island a quarter of a mile away. This was soon reached, and a long hour did I search for my game among the bushes and grass, but I sought in vain. This island was about two furlongs in length and one in width. At one end was a group of lofty sycamores, and at the other three black pines stood together, like robbers plotting the destruction of an enemy. Between and beneath these, the dark-green and luxuriant foliage of less ambitious trees formed to all appearance a solid mass. Here the light-green ivy encircled some youthful ash, from whose top it wandered among the limbs of other trees: and there, the clustering fruit hung in great abundance from the brown grape-vine. While rambling about this island, I discovered in its centre a little clearing, or miniature prairie, on which stood a single wigwam. A wreath of smoke rose from its chimney between the trees, gracefully curling upward to the sky. I entered the hut, and beheld the form of an Indian, who was engaged in cooking his noonday meal. At first he was surprised at my presence, but when I told him I was merely on a hunting excursion, his countenance changed, and he manifested much pleasure. His kindness, and my boyish familiarity, conspired to make us soon acquainted. He was a tall, athletic, well-proportioned man, with dark eagle eyes. His long locks of hair were now whitening with age. I will not dwell upon the particulars of that interview. Let it suffice to know that I

departed from that "green and lovely isle," feeling that I had a friend in the person of that old Indian.

Many a day, during that summer and the ensuing autumn, did I spend in his society. Many a table luxury brought I to his lonely dwelling. Many a lesson has he taught me, in the arts of fishing and hunting. Long years have flown since then. But the wild and pure enjoyments which I then participated in with this old Indian, are deeply engraven on the tablet of my memory.

We used often to enter our respective canoes and explore the neighbouring creeks and rivers, little islands of the bay, and others far out into the lake. We would bathe together; at one time wading out from the sandy and sloping shore, and again leaping and diving from some abrupt headland into the clear water, so clear and pure that the shells upon the bottom were distinctly seen at the depth of twenty feet or more. I never troubled myself about the origin of this old Indian. His name, to what nation he belonged, or his reasons for thus living alone, were things that I never desired to know. I was content to be with him, and during our various excursions to listen to his wild legends, his narratives of strange adventures and exploits, which he would recount in broken English, though always with the eloquence of nature. Oft-times I could not comprehend his meaning, more especially when he described the beauties of the Spirit Land, which he said existed far beyond the setting sun; and also when he told me of its valleys, and mountains, and forests, smiling under the influence of perpetual summer, where the singing of birds was always heard, and where the buffalo, the horse, the deer, the antelope, the bear, the wolf, the panther, the musk-rat, and otter, flourished and fattened for its inhabitants.

When we looked upon the lurid lightning, and listened to the sullen roar of the distant thunder, he would raise his hands to heaven, exclaiming, "the Great Spirit is angry," and kneeling down, would kiss the ground in fear and adoration. Pleasantly indeed did the days of that summer, and the ensuing autumn, pass away. At last winter came, and the waters of the ever-murmuring Raisin were clasped in his icy chains. In a little time I lost sight of my old friend, for his island home was deso-

late—he had departed—no one knew where. Spring came, and I was sent to an eastern city to school. Five years were flown, and I returned to the village of my birth. At the twilight hour, a few evenings after this, I was seated at an open window with my mother, inhaling the fragrance of blowing flowers, and at times listening to the mellow tones of the sweet whippoorwill. All the important incidents that had transpired during my absence, were affectionately and particularly related. Nothing, however, interested me so much as the following brief account of my old Indian friend, which I now write down as it was told me.

"The summer after you left us, an Indian made his appearance in our village, whose poverty and old age elicited the kind sympathies and good wishes of all who knew him. Nothing was known of his history, save that he belonged to a tribe of Potawattomees, a nation at this period almost extinct. Alas! for the poor aborigines of our country! To them the earth is a dreary place, and their only joy is in the hope that they will soon join their kindred in the land of spirits. One by one, like the lingering sands of an hour glass, they are passing beyond the grave.

"As I heard you talk about an Indian, with whom you had become acquainted while hunting, I thought this new comer might be the identical one. While passing through the village one day, I happened to meet him, and invited him to come and sup with us that evening. He did so: and we were very glad to hear that he was indeed your friend, whom you thought dead. We discovered this fact from the manner in which he spoke of a boy hunter, who used to visit him in his lonely home. From that day he became our particular friend, as he had been before the friend of the whole village.

"His dress was common, but in the true Indian style. He was ever a great favourite among the boys, in whose sports he often participated. It was his custom in summer to sit beneath the great elm-tree on the green, and, gathering the children around him, rehearse to them wild stories about the red men of the forest. Sometimes he would spend a whole day in whittling out bows and arrows for his youthful friends; and they in return would bestow on him various little presents, both curious and

rare. He had no particular abiding-place. There were a dozen houses where he was perfectly at home. He seldom alluded to his tribe, and never ventured beyond the limits of the county. This was indeed unaccountable; but as he seemed to possess so amiable a disposition, no one could believe he had ever been guilty of a crime. Rather than this, it was thought he had been banished from his nation on account of some failure in warlike exploits, or some similar cause.

"Perhaps, again, he was an Indian philosopher or poet, who had unfortunately drawn upon himself the ill-will of his people, by expressing some unpopular opinion. At times he would enter the school-house, and listen attentively to the boys reciting their lessons. A printed book he looked upon as a treasure, and when one was given him, considered it a sacred gift, though he could not read its contents. He would often enter the church on the Sabbath, and in his seat near the pulpit, with his head resting upon both hands, would listen, with an anxious gaze, to the preacher's words. He always left the house in a pensive mood. To his mind the heaven of the Christian was utterly incomprehensible. Of all the truths that were read to him from the Bible, the most interesting and wonderful was the history of our Saviour. When listening to this, he would often clasp his hands in an ecstasy of delight, exclaiming, 'How good man! how good man!'

"On all occasions of festivity he was a welcome guest. Christmas and New Year were always happy days with him. The little girls invited him to their pic-nic parties. The boys on Saturday afternoon had him to keep tally when they were playing ball. He was the leader of the nutting-parties in autumn, and a participator in the sleigh-rides of winter. In fact, he was every where, and had a hand in almost every thing that transpired.

"About six weeks ago it was reported throughout the village that our old Indian friend was very sick, and at the point of death. The intelligence was no less unexpected than melancholy. He had so completely won the affection of every body, that it spread a universal gloom. In a few days he yielded up his spirit to his Father and his God. The next day was the Sabbath, and the one appointed for his burial. The sky was without a cloud,

and the cool breeze, as it rustled among the leaves, brought health and refreshment to the body and soul of every one. The meadow-lark, and woodland birds sang louder and sweeter than they were wont to do. A good man had died, and Nature, animate and inanimate, seemed anxious to pronounce his requiem. A larger funeral than this I have seldom seen. Old men and women, young men and maidens, and little children, with tearful eyes followed the old Indian to his grave. It is situated in the north-east corner of the burying-ground, in the shadow of two weeping willows, that seem the guardians of his silent resting-place."

On the following evening, an hour before sunset, I stood beside the clay cottage of my Indian friend. Green was the grass, and many and beautiful the flowers that flourished above his grave. I plucked a single one to keep as a token of one whom I had dearly loved,—who was born a benighted heathen, but died a Christian. The mildly-beaming and beautiful evening star had risen in the west, ere I departed from the "Silent City;" but I felt that the flower I had plucked, though faded, would in after hours remind me of my friend, and I therefore came away in peace, repeating to myself these words:—

> "And I am glad that he has lived thus long,
> And glad that he has gone to his reward;
> Nor deem that kindly Nature did him wrong,
> Softly to disengage the vital cord.
> When his weak hand grew palsied, and his eye
> Dark with the mists of age, it was his time to die."
>
> *Bryant.*

And now comes the conclusion of my long rhapsody. The time of my departure for my distant city home is at hand. A few more wilderness pictures, illustrative of my native State as it was in other days, and I will lay aside my pen.

Weary with the hunt, I lately sought the shady side of a gentle hill, and extending my limbs upon the green-sward amused myself by watching the sky. I gazed upon the blue canopy, and fancied it to be an ocean, beyond which were the broad and beautiful fields of heaven. A few white feathery clouds were floating there, and they seemed to me to be a fleet returning from their home of peace. In the dark regions of night they

had fought and conquered the enemy, and now laden with redeemed souls, were hastening to the haven of eternal rest. Fancy, which had pictured this image, was gone; I saw nothing save an eagle playing above the trees of the forest, and in a moment I was a dreamer.

It seemed to me that I entered a forest just as the glorious summer sun was sinking to his repose. The evening star rose in the west, and in a little while, from the zenith, a thousand other bright constellations looked smilingly down upon the earth. Something whispered me that I must spend the long watches of that night in wandering in the wilderness; and I departed with the silence of a shadow, and the speed of the wind. Strange, and wild, and beautiful, were the scenes I beheld.

The mighty trees which rose on every side seemed like the columns of a vast temple, whose mysterious winding aisles, overhung with a multitudinous foliage, were deserted and desolate. No moving objects met my eye, save the fireflies that darted in all directions, floating and sinking like burning flakes of snow. The gloomy silence was broken only by the chirp of the cricket, and the song of the katydid. At intervals, too, the clear soothing voice of the whippoorwill would echo far and near. The huge masses of foliage above, reminded me of thunder-clouds, and like them oppressed my spirit; and it was so still that "the dropping dew woke startling echoes in the sleeping wood."

My pathway was not smooth, for I was forced to leap, now over some dead tree, and now over a pile of brush; and again over a mossy hillock, or some gurgling brooklet. Ever and anon I caught a glimpse of the deep blue sky; but in a moment it was lost to view, and I was in total darkness. My vision was wonderful. I saw all surrounding objects with intense clearness; for to me the "darkness was as the light of day." At times I paused to listen, startled by some distant sound; the howl of a wolf, the hooting of an owl, or the "trumpet-tone" of a flying swan; and as I listened, it would become a murmur, then a whisper, and at last die into a breathless stillness.

At the foot of a gnarled and stunted oak I saw the manly form of an Indian, wrapped in his scarlet blanket, and extended

upon a bearskin. He was fast asleep. On one side of him, and within his reach, lay a bundle of arrows, and an unstrung bow; on the other, a knapsack of provisions and a wolfish-looking dog. But this guardian of the slumbering savage was also fast asleep. As I looked upon this simple picture, the feelings of my heart responded to my thoughts, and I exclaimed, though there was no echo to my words: "Poor lone Indian! Is that dog thy only friend? Art thou indeed alone in the wide, wide world? Hast thou no wife to sympathize with thee, to love thee, in those hours of disappointment and troubles incident to human life? No children to play around thy knees, and make thee happy in some comfortable wigwam, when the blue and scarlet birds make melody in summer, and the wind Euroclydon howls and roars among the forest trees in winter? Hast thou no daughter to protect and cherish, that she may be the bride of some future warrior? No son to listen, with flashing eye, to thy hunting lessons; to smite his breast with pride and anger as thou tellest him of the bravery and wrongs of thy ancestors? O that I knew thy history! But I will not disturb thy slumber. May thy dreams be of that land beyond the sunset clouds, where perpetual summer reigns,—the land of the Great Spirit,—the God of thy fathers."

How vividly do the scenes and incidents of that night arise before my vision! I see them now with the same distinctness that I beheld them then. I stand upon the shore of that dark stream, rolling through the dense woods, where the full blaze of daylight has not penetrated for centuries. I hear that uncouth but solemn funeral hymn, and see a band of stern red men performing their mysterious rites over the grave of an aged chieftain.

Not less sudden than varied are the scenes I behold. On that high dry limb, under a canopy of leaves, a flock of turkeys are roosting. They are all asleep save one, and he is acting the part of a sentinel, darting out his long neck, now this way, now that, as if he beheld an enemy. Fat, sleepy fellow! There was a time when it would have been temerity to look at me thus. I am not a hunter now, else would I bring you down from your lofty resting-place.

My course is onward. Hark! I hear a yell, and a rushing sound. Two wolves are chasing a beautiful doe. Poor creature! Its strength is already lessening, its race is run. The wolves have seized it. There is a struggle; the blood issues from her graceful neck; one gasp more, and the tender mother of two sweet fawns lies dead. Its bones will moulder and mingle with the earth, giving nourishment to that cluster of hazel-bushes which stand beside her mossy death-bed. Awakened by the scent, a croaking raven is wheeling in the distance. Its wings flap heavily, and there are two, and still another! See! we come to a kind of opening,—a place where the trees grow less closely together. A cloud of thin white smoke is rising, as if from yonder pile of underbrush. It is an Indian encampment; a dozen bark wigwams, shaped like a sugar loaf. But why this bustle at so late an hour? The men have just returned from a three days' hunting tour, and they are now releasing their pack-horses from their loads of spoil. The blaze from a fire gives all surrounding objects a ruddy glow. In dire confusion upon the ground lie haunches of venison, red and grey squirrels and racoons, turkeys, grouse, ducks, pheasants, and many other lesser birds, mingled with guns, bows and arrows, shot-pouches, powderhorns, skins, halters, brass kettles, and the like. The men are busy, and the women too. Roused from a four hours' nap, several children are coming out from their tents, rubbing their eyes. They seem to be the only playmates of the whining dogs.

Lo! what a beauteous sight! A herd of deer reposing like a family of wood-sprites, near yonder clump of young maples! There are three bucks, five does, and two lovely spotted fawns. Upon that decayed "stump" beyond, a solitary American nightingale is resting. It is my favourite bird. Would that I knew the cause of its complainings and chastisement, for every now and then it utters forth the cry, "Why whip poor Will?"

What silver rays are those darting down through the leafy bough? The moon! the moon! High in the heavens she sails in queenly beauty. The very heart of the forest is not beyond her vivifying influence. Festoons of creeping plants hang from the surrounding limbs; and the ivy and grape-vine have twined

themselves so closely around that ash, as entirely to hide from view the bark of the trunk. I thrust my hand against a bush, and a thousand dew-drops fall to the earth, glittering in the moonbeam. If my lady-love were with me, what a gorgeous wreath could I now weave for her beautiful brow out of the purple and scarlet iris, the blue larkspur, the moccason-flower, th crimson and green lichen, and other mosses, flowers, and vines, too delicate to have a name!

A gentle breeze is stirring. The tops of the trees are moving to and fro with the strong but gentle motion of a ground-swell. Soothing is the music of the leaves; they seem to murmur with excess of joy. Another sound echoes through the listening wilderness. It is but a scuffle between a panther and bear. Let them growl and fight; who cares? How like two hot headed politicians do they seem!

Again are the trees becoming thinner, and my steps are tending downward. The greensward I press is without a single stick or bramble. Here I am upon the brink of a little lake of the very purest water! The breeze has spent its force, and every thing is still. It is "the bridal hour of the earth and sky!" What a perfect mirror is this liquid element! The counterpart of two willows, a grass-grown rock, tall reeds, and, beyond all, a row of slender elms, and a lightning-shivered pine, are distinctly seen, pointing downward, downward to the moon and stars, in the cerulean void beneath. And in yon deep shadow a flock of ducks are floating silently, amid the sweet perfume of the wild lotus and white water lily, which are growing near. One or two have wandered out into the lake, making no ripple, but moving as if lured away by the glossy loveliness of their shadows. The same mysterious influence which has brought me thus far, will transport me to the opposite shore.

I am already there! yet still my course is onward. I am come to a little lawn, so smooth and beautiful that it seems a fit playground for the fairies. Perhaps it is here the water-spirits and wood-nymphs are wont to meet, to revel and rejoice at midnight, "the dawn of the fairy day."

What sound is that?—so like the far-off tones of a hundred

musical instruments, faintly murmuring? There! I thought so. Here they are:

> "They come from beds of lichen green,
> They creep from the mullen's velvet screen;
> Some on the backs of beetles fly,
> From the silver tops of moon-touched trees,
> Where they swung in their cobweb hammocks high,
> And rocked about in the evening breeze;
> Some from the hum-bird's downy nest,—
> They had driven him out by elfin power,
> And pillowed on plumes of his rainbow breast,
> Have slumbered there till the charmed hour.
> Some had lain in the scoop of the rock,
> With glittering ising-stars inlaid,
> And some had opened the four-o'-clock,
> And stole within its purple shade.
> And now they throng the moonlight glade,
> Above—below—on every side,
> Their little minim forms arrayed
> In the tricksy pomp of fairy pride!"
>
> *Drake.*

Only another flight of fancy. I look again, and instead of the fairies, I behold a thousand flowers, peeping from the green luxuriant grass.

But see! I have reached a prairie! What dark cloud is brooding over the scene?—a mighty flame bursting from its centre? It comes! it comes! The prairie is on fire! The wind is rising, and swift as the wind speed the flame-banners. Maddened by fear, the buffalo, and wild horse, the wolf, and the deer, birds, and other living creatures, are fleeing for their lives. Roaring and hissing the fire-flood rolls on, swallowing up every thing in its course. And now it has gone, leaving behind it a wide path of blackness. The smoke obscures the moon and stars. "Far-off its coming shone;" the incense one could almost imagine of a sacrifice offered to the great God by the Earth, for some enormous sin. But it is gone; and I resume my journey.

I am now in an open country of gentle hills and dales. A narrow but deep river is gliding by me in its pride and beauty. Now it is lost to view by some abrupt headland, and anon it makes a long sweep through a plain or meadow, its ripples sporting in the moonlight. I hear the splash of fish, leaping from their

watery bed. I hear the measured stroke of a paddle; it is an Indian in his canoe, passing down the river; he has started a loon from his wavy cradle. I hear the sound of a waterfall. A mile away there is a precipice, where the river gathers all its strength for a fearful leap. Now its surface is without a ripple,—but in a moment more, it plunges among the rocks, and the waves struggle, and leap, and rise and sink, like demon-spirits in agony.

I am standing on a hill which overlooks a lovely landscape of woods and lawns, streams, hills, valleys, and cultivated fields,—farm-houses and church steeples. In the distance sleep the bright green waves of Lake Erie. A streak of daylight is in the eastern sky. The spell is broken;—my dream, and my book about the wilderness, are both ended.

CHAPTER XI.

LAKE HORICON.

LYMAN'S TAVERN.

IF circumstances alone could make one poetical, then might you expect from me, on this occasion, a paper of rare excellence and beauty. My sketch-book is my desk; my canopy from the sunshine, an elm tree; the carpet under my feet, a rich green sprinkled with flowers; the music in my ear singing birds; and the prospect before me, north, east, and south, the tranquil bosom of Lake George, with its islands and surrounding mountains; whose waters, directly at my side, are alive with many kinds of fish, sporting together on a bed of sand. Yes, the far-famed Lake George is my subject; but in what I write, I shall not use that title,—for I do not like the idea of christening what belongs to us with the name of an English monarch, however much his memory deserves to be respected. Shall it be lake St Sacrament, then? No! for that was given to it by the Pope, and the French nation. Horicon—a musical and appropriate word, meaning pure water, and given to it by the poor Indian —is the name which rightfully belongs to the lake which is now my theme.

Lake Horicon is one of the few objects in Nature which did not disappoint me after reading the descriptions of travellers. I verily believe that, in point of mere beauty, it has not its superior in the world. Its length is thirty-four miles, and its width from two to four. Its islands number about three hundred, and vary from ten feet to a mile in length;—a great many of them are located in the centre of the lake, at a place called the Narrows. It is completely surrounded with mountains; the most prominent of which are, Black Mountain, on the east of the Narrows;

Tongue Mountain, directly opposite, and French Mountain, at the southern extremity. The first is the most lofty, and remarkable for its wildness, and the superb prospect therefrom; the second is also wild and uninhabited, but distinguished for its dens of rattlesnakes; and the latter is somewhat cultivated, but memorable for having been the camping ground of the French during the Revolutionary War. The whole eastern border is yet a comparative wilderness; but along the western shore are some respectable farms, and a good coach road from Caldwell to Ticonderoga, which affords many admirable views of the sky-blue lake. There are three public houses here which I can recommend: the Lake House, for those who are fond of company—Lyman's Tavern, for the hunter of scenery and lover of quiet—and Garfield's House for the fisherman. A nice little steamboat, commanded by a gentleman, passes through every morning and evening (excepting Sundays), and though a convenient affair to the traveller, it is an eyesore to the admirer of the wilderness. Identified with this boat is an eccentric man named *Old Dick*, who amuses the tourist, and collects an occasional shilling by exhibiting a number of rattlesnakes. When, in addition to all these things, it is remembered that Horicon is the centre of a region made classic by the exploits of civilized and savage warfare, it can safely be pronounced one of the most interesting portions of our country for the summer tourist to visit. I have looked upon it from many a peak whence might be seen almost every rood of its shore. I have sailed into every one of its bays, and, like the pearl-diver, have repeatedly descended into its cold blue chambers, so that I have learned to love it as a faithful and well tried friend. Since the day of my arrival here, I have kept a journal of my adventures, and, as a memorial of Horicon, I will extract therefrom, and embody in this chapter the following passages:—

A goodly portion of this day have I been musing upon the olden times, while rambling about Fort George and Fort William Henry. Long and with peculiar interest did I linger about the spot near the latter, where were cruelly massacred the followers

of Monroe, at which time Montcalm linked his name to the title of a heartless Frenchman, and the name of Webb became identified with all that is justly despised by the human heart. I profess myself to be an enemy to wrong and outrage of every kind, and yet a lover and defender of the Indian race; but when I picked up one after another the flinty heads of arrows, which were mementos of an awful butchery, my spirit revolted against the red man, and for a moment I felt a desire to condemn him. Yes, I will condemn that particular band of murderers, but I cannot but defend the race. Cruel and treacherous they were, I will allow, but do we not forget the treatment they ever met with from the white man? The most righteous of battles have ever been fought for the sake of sires, and wives, and children, and for what else did the poor Indian fight, when driven from the home of his youth into an unknown wilderness, to become thereafter a by-word and a reproach among the nations? "Indians," said we, "we would have your lands, and if you will not be satisfied with the gewgaws we proffer, our powder and balls will teach you that power is but another name for right.' And this is the principle that has guided the white man ever since in his warfare against the aborigines of our country. I cannot believe that we shall ever be a happy and prosperous people until the King of kings shall have forgiven us for having, with a yoke of tyranny, almost annihilated an hundred nations.

A portion of this afternoon I whiled away on a little island, which attracted my attention by its charming variety of foliage. It is not more than one hundred feet across at the widest part, and is encircled by a yellow sand bank, and shielded by a regiment of variegated rocks. But what could I find there to interest me, it may be inquired? My answer is this This island, hidden in one of the bays of Horicon, is an insect city, and more populous than was Rome in the days of her glory. There the honey-bee has his oaken tower, the wasp and humble-bee their grassy nests, the spider his den, the butterfly his hammock, the grasshopper his domain, the beetle, and cricket, and hornet, their decayed stump, and the toiling ant her palace of sand. There they were

born, there they flourish and multiply, and there they die, symbolizing the career and destiny of man. I was a "distinguished stranger" in that city, and I must confess that it gratified my ambition to be welcomed with such manifestations of regard as the inhabitants thought proper to bestow. My approach was heralded by the song of a kingly bee; and when I had thrown myself upon a mossy bank, multitudes of people gathered round, and, with their eyes intently fixed upon me, stood still, and let "expressive silence muse my praise." To the "natives" I was emphatically a source of astonishment, and as I wished to gather instruction from the incident, I wondered in my heart whether I would be a *happier* man if my presence in a human city should create a kindred excitement. At any rate it would be a "great excitement on a small capital."

While quietly eating my dinner this noon in the shady recess of an island near Black Mountain, I was startled by the yell of a pack of hounds coming down one of its ravines. I knew that the chase was after a deer, so I waited in breathless anxiety for his appearance, and five minutes had hardly elapsed before I discovered a noble buck at bay on the extreme summit of a bluff which extended into the lake. There were five dogs yelping about him, but the "antlered monarch" fought them like a hero. His hoof was the most dangerous weapon he could wield, and it seemed to me that the earth actually trembled every time that he struck at his enemies. Presently, to my great joy, one of the hounds was killed, and another so disabled, that he retired from the contest. But the hunters made their appearance, and I knew that the scene would soon come to a tragic close, and when the buck beheld them, I could not but believe that over his face a "tablet of *agonizing* thoughts was traced," for he fell upon his knees, then made a sudden wheel, and with a frightful bound, as a ball passed through his heart, cleared the rock and fell into the lake below. The waters closed over him, and methought that the waves of Horicon and the leaves of the forest murmured a requiem above the grave of the wilderness king. I turned away, and partly resolved that I would never again

have a dog for my friend, or respect the character of a hunter; but then I looked into the crystal waters of the lake, and thought of the *beam* in my own eye, and stood convicted of a kindred cruelty.

One of the most singular precipices overlooking Horicon is about five miles from the outlet, and known as Rogers' Slide. It is some four hundred feet high, and at one point not a fissure or sprig can be discovered to mar the polished surface of the rock till it reaches the water. Once on a time, in the winter, the said Rogers was pursued by a band of Indians to this spot, when, after throwing down his knapsack, he carefully retraced the steps of his snow-shoes for a short distance, and descending the hill by a circuitous route, continued his course across the frozen lake. The Indians, on coming to the jumping off place, discovered their enemy on the icy plain, but when they saw the neglected knapsack below, and no signs of returning footsteps where they stood, they thought the devil was in the man, and gave up the pursuit.

The most famous, and one of the most beautiful islands in this lake, is Diamond Island, so called from the fact that it abounds in crystallized quartz. It is half a mile in length, but the last place which would be thought of as the scene of a battle. It is memorable for the attack made by the Americans on the British, who had a garrison there, during the Revolution. The American detachment was commanded by Col Brown, and being elated with his recent triumphs on Lake Champlain, he resolved to attack Diamond Island. The battle was bloody, and the British fought like brave men, "long and well," the Americans were defeated, and this misfortune was followed by the sufferings of a most painful retreat over the almost impassable mountains between the Lake and what is now Whitehall. While wandering about the island it was a difficult matter for me to realize that it had ever resounded with the roar of cannon, the dismal wail of war, and the shout of victory. That spot is now covered with woods, whose shadowy groves are the abode of a

thousand birds, for ever singing a song of peace or love, as if to condemn the ambition and cruelty of man.

In the vicinity of French Mountain is an island celebrated as the burial-place of a rattlesnake hunter, named Belden. From all that I can learn, he must have been a strange mortal indeed. His birth-place and early history were alike unknown. When he first made his appearance at this lake, his only companions were a brotherhood of rattlesnakes, by exhibiting which he professed to have obtained his living; and it is said that, during the remainder of his life, he acquired a handsome sum of money by selling the oil and gall of his favourite reptile. And I have recently been told that the present market price of a fat snake, when dead, is not less than half a dollar. Another mode peculiar to old Belden for making money, was to suffer himself to be bitten, at some tavern, after which he would return to his cabin to apply the remedy, when he would come forth again just as good as new. But he was not always to be a solemn trifler. For a week had the old man been missing, and on a pleasant August morning, his body was found on the island alluded to, sadly mutilated and bloated, and it was certain that he had died actually surrounded with rattlesnakes. His death-bed became his grave, and rattlesnakes were his only watchers; —thus endeth the story of his life.

But this reminds me of two little adventures. The other day as I was seated near the edge of a sand bar, near the mouth of a brook, sketching a group of trees and the sunset clouds beyond, I was startled by an immense black snake, that landed at my side, and pursued its way directly under my legs, upon which my drawing-book was resting. Owing to my perfect silence, the creature had probably looked upon me as a mere stump. But what was my surprise a few moments after, when re seated in the same place, to find another snake, and that a large spotted adder, passing along the same track the former had pursued. The first fright had almost disabled me from using the pencil, but when the second came, I gave a lusty yell, and, forgetful of the fine arts, started for home on the keen run.

At another time, when returning from a fishing excursion in a boat, accompanied by a couple of "green-horns," we discovered on the water, near Tongue Mountain, an immense rattlesnake with his head turned towards us. As the oarsman in the bow of the boat struck at him with his oar, the snake coiled round it, and the fool was in the very act of dropping the devilish thing in my lap. I had heard the creature rattle, and not knowing what I did, as he hung suspended over me, overboard I went, and did not look behind until I had reached the land. The consequence was, that for one while I was perfectly disgusted even with Lake Horicon, and resolved to leave it without delay. The snake was killed without doing any harm however, but such a blowing up as I gave the green-horn actually made his hair stand straight with fear.

One more snake story, and I will conclude. On the north side of Black Mountain is a cluster of some half dozen houses, in a vale, which spot is called the Bosom, but from what cause I do not know. The presiding genii of the place are a band of girls, weighing two hundred pounds a piece, who farm it with their fathers for a living, but whose principal *amusement* is rattlesnake hunting. Their favourite playground is the notorious cliff on Tongue Mountain, where they go with naked feet (rowing their own boats across the lake), and pull out by their tails from the rocks the pretty playthings, and, snapping them to death, they lay them away in a basket as trophies of their skill. I was told that in one day last year they killed the incredible number of eleven hundred. What delicious wives would these Horicon ladies make! Since the Florida Indians have been driven from their country by blood-hounds, would it not be a good idea for Congress to secure the services of these Amazons for the purpose of exterminating the rattlesnakes upon our mountains? This latter movement would be the most ridiculous, but the inhumanity of the former is without a parallel.

A clear and tranquil summer night, and I am alone on the pebbly beach of this paragon of lakes. The countless hosts of heaven are beaming upon me with a silent joy, and more im-

pressive and holy than a poet's dream are the surrounding mountains, as they stand reflected in the unruffled waters. Listen! what sound is that so like the wail of a spirit? Only a loon, the lonely night-watcher of Horicon, whose melancholy moan, as it breaks the profound stillness, carries my fancy back to the olden Indian times, ere the white man had crossed the ocean. All these mountains and this beautiful lake were then the heritage of a brave and noble hearted people, who made war only upon the denizens of the forest, whose lives were peaceful as a dream, and whose manly forms, decorated with the plumes of the eagle, the feathers of the scarlet bird, and the robe of the bounding stag, tended but to make the scenery of the wilderness beautiful as an earthly Eden. Here was the quiet wigwam village, and there the secluded abode of the thoughtful chief. Here, unmolested, the Indian child played with the spotted fawn, and the "Indian lover wooed his dusky mate," here the Indian hunter, in the "sunset of his life," watched with holy awe the sunset in the west; and here the ancient Indian prophetess sung her uncouth but religous chant. Gone - all, all gone —and the desolate creature of the waves, now pealing forth another wail, seems the only memorial that they have left behind. There— my recent aspirations are all quelled, I can walk no farther to-night,—there is a sadness in my soul, and I must seek my home. It is such a blessed night, it seems almost sinful that a blight should rest on the spirit of man; yet on mine a gloom will sometimes fall, nor can I tell whence the cloud that makes me wretched.

CHAPTER XII.

THE SCAROON COUNTRY.

LINDSLEY'S TAVERN.

EMPTYING into the Hudson river, about fifteen miles north of Glen's Falls, is quite a large stream, sometimes called the East Branch of the Hudson, but generally known as Scaroon River.* Its extreme length is not far from fifty miles. It is a clear, cold, and rapid stream, winds through a mountainous country, and has rather a deep channel. The valley through which it runs is somewhat cultivated, but the mountains which frown upon it on either side, are covered with dense forests. The valley of the Scaroon abounds in beautiful lakes and brooks; and as I have explored them pretty thoroughly during the past week, I will now record the result of my observations.

The most prominent pictorial feature of this region is Scaroon Lake, through which the river of that name forms a channel. It is ten miles in length, and averages about one in width. Excepting a little hamlet at its head, and two or three farms at the southern extremity, it is yet surrounded with a wilderness of mountains. The waters thereof are deep and clear, and well supplied with fish, of which the salmon trout and pike are the most valuable. The trout are more abundant here than in Lake George, but owing to the prevailing custom of spearing them in the autumn, they are rapidly becoming extinct. I made a desperate effort to capture one as a specimen, but without success, though I was told that they varied in weight from ten to fifteen pounds. My efforts, however, in taking pike, were more encou-

* The word Schroon is bad English for the Indian word Scaroon, the meaning of which is - "*child of the mountains.*" The river was originally named by an Algonquin chief, after a favourite daughter.

raging. But, before giving my experience, I must mention an interesting fact in natural history. Previous to the year 1840, Scaroon Lake was not known to contain a single pike, but during that year, some half dozen males and females were brought from Lake Champlain and deposited therein, since which time they have multiplied so rapidly as to be quite abundant, not only in Scaroon Lake, but in all the neighbouring waters, and as they are frequently taken weighing some twenty pounds, the fact seems to be established that this fish grows rapidly, and is not of slow growth, as many naturalists have supposed.

But to my pike story. A number of lumbermen were going out for the purpose of taking pike by torchlight, and I was fortunate enough to secure a seat in one of the three flat boats which contained the fishermen. It was a superb night, and the lake was without a ripple. Our torches were made of "fat pine," as it is here called, and my polite friends taking it for granted that I was a novice in the spearing business, they cunningly awarded to me the dullest spear in their possession, and gave me the poorest position in the boat. I said nothing to all this, but inwardly resolved that I would give them a salutary lesson, if possible. I fished from nine until twelve o'clock, and then left my friends to continue the sport. The entire number of pike taken, as I found out in the morning, was thirteen, and, as fortune would have it, four of this number were captured by myself, in spite of my poor spear. I did not take the largest fish, which weighed eighteen pounds, but the greatest number, with which success I was fully satisfied. The effect of my good-luck was unexpected to my companions, but gratifying to me, for there was afterwards a strife between them as to who should show me the most attention in the way of piloting me about the country. This little adventure taught me the importance of understanding even the vagabond art of spearing.

The event of that night, however, which afforded me the purest enjoyment, was the witnessing of a moonlight scene, immediately after leaving the lake shore for the inn where I was tarrying. Before me, in wild and solemn beauty, lay the southern portion of the Scaroon, on whose bosom were gliding the spear-

men, holding high above their heads their huge torches, which threw a spectral glare, not only upon the water, but upon the swarthy forms watching for their prey. Just at this moment an immense cloud of fog broke away, and directly above the summit of the opposite mountain, the clear, full moon made its appearance, and a thousand fantastic figures, born of the fog, were pictured in the sky, and appeared extremely brilliant under the effulgence of the ruling planet; while the zenith was of a deep blue, cloudless, but completely spangled with stars. And what greatly added to the magic of the scene, was the dismal scream of a loon, which came to my ear from a remote portion of the lake yet covered with a heavy fog.

Rising from the western margin of Scaroon lake is a lofty mountain, which was once painted by Thomas Cole, and by him named Scaroon Mountain. There is nothing particularly imposing about it, but it commands an uncommonly fine prospect of the surrounding country. When I first came in sight of this mountain it struck me as an old acquaintance, and I reined in my horse for the purpose of investigating its features. Before I resumed my course, I concluded that I was standing on the very spot whence the artist had taken his original sketch of the scene, by which circumstance I was convinced of the fidelity of his pencil.

The largest island in Scaroon lake lies near the northern extremity, and studs the water like an emerald on a field of blue. It was purchased, some years ago, by a gentleman of New York, named Keland, who has built a summer residence upon it for the accommodation of himself and friends.

Emptying into the Scaroon river, just below the lake, is a superb mountain stream, known as Trout Brook. It is thirty feet wide, twelve miles long, and comes rushing down the mountains, forming innumerable waterfalls and pools, and filling its narrow valley with an everlasting roar of music. Not only is it distinguished for the quality and number of its trout, but it possesses one attraction which will pay the tourist for the weary tramp he must undergo to explore its remote recesses. I allude to what the people about here call "the Stone Bridge." At

this point, the wild and dashing stream has formed a channel directly through the solid mountains, so that, in fishing down, the angler suddenly finds himself standing upon a pile of dry stones. The extent of this natural bridge is not more than twenty or, perhaps, thirty feet; but the wonder is, that the unseen channel is sufficiently large to admit the passage of the largest logs which the lumbermen float down the stream. I might also add, that at the foot of this bridge is one of the finest pools imaginable. It is, perhaps, one hundred feet long, and so very deep that the clear water appears quite black. This is the finest spot in the whole brook for trout, and my luck there may be described as follows: I had basketed no less than nine half-pounders, when my fly was suddenly seized, and my snell snapped in twain by the fierceness of his leaps. The consequence of that defeat was, that I resolved to capture the trout, if I had to remain there all night. I then ransacked the mountain side for a living bait, and, with the aid of my companion, succeeded in capturing a small mouse, and, just as the twilight was coming on, I tied the little fellow to my hook, and threw him on the water. He swam across in fine style; but when he reached the centre of the pool, a large trout leaped completely out of his element, and in descending seized the mouse, and the result was, that I broke my rod but caught the trout, and, though the mouse was seriously injured, I had the pleasure of again giving him his liberty.

The largest trout that I killed weighed over a pound, and though he was the cause of my receiving a ducking, he afforded me some sport, and gave me a new idea. When I first hooked him, I stood on the very margin of the stream, knee-deep in a bog, and, just as I was about to basket him, he gave a sudden leap, cleared himself, and fell into the water. Quick as thought I made an effort to rescue him, but in doing so, lost my balance, and was playing the part of a turtle in a tub of water. I then became poetical, and thought it "would never do to give it up so," and after waiting some fifteen minutes, I returned and tried for the lost trout again. I threw my fly some twenty feet above the place where I had tumbled in, and recaptured the identical fish which I had lost. I recognised him by his having a torn

and bleeding mouth. This circumstance convinced me that trout, like many of the sons of men, have short memories, and also that the individual in question was a perfect Richelieu or General Taylor in his way, for he seemed to know no such word as fail. As to the trout that I did not capture, I verily believe that he must have weighed two pounds; but as he was, probably, a superstitious gentleman, he thought it the better part of valour, somewhat like Santa Anna, to treat the steel of his enemy with contempt.

The brook of which I have been speaking, is only twenty-five miles from Lake Horicon, and unquestionably one of the best streams for the angler in the Scaroon valley. The Trout Brook Pavilion, at the mouth of it, kept by one Lockwood, is a comfortable inn; and his right hand man, named Kipp, is a very fine fellow and a genuine angler.

Speaking of the above friends, reminds me of another, a fine man, named Lyndsey, who keepeth a tavern about ten miles north of Scaroon lake. His dwelling is delightfully situated in the centre of a deep valley, and is a nice and convenient place to stop at, for those who are fond of fishing, and admire romantic scenery. His family, including his wife, two daughters and one son, not only know how to make their friends comfortable, but they seem to have a passion for doing kind deeds. During my stay at this place, I had the pleasure of witnessing a most interesting game, which seems to be peculiar to this part of the country. It was played with the common ball, and by one hundred sturdy farmers. Previous to the time alluded to, fifty Scaroon players had challenged an equal number of players from a neighbouring village named Moriah. The conditions were that the defeated party should pay for a dinner, to be given by my friend Lyndsey. They commenced playing at nine o'clock, and the game was ended in about three hours, the Scaroon party having won by about ten counts in five hundred. The majority of the players varied from thirty to thirty-five years of age, though some of the most expert of them were verging upon sixty years. They played with the impetuosity of school-boys, and there were some admirable feats performed in the way of knocking and catching

the-ball. Some of the men could number their acres by thousands, and all of them were accustomed to severe labour, and yet they thought it absolutely necessary to participate occasionally in this manly and fatiguing sport. The dinner passed off in fine style, and was spiced by many agricultural anecdotes, and as the sun was setting, the parties separated in the best of spirits and returned to their several homes.

For fear that I should forget my duty, I would now introduce to my reader a sheet of water embosomed among these mountains, which glories in the name of Lake Paradox. How it came by that queer title, I was not able to learn: but this I know, that it is one of the most beautiful lakes I have ever seen. It is five miles long, and surrounded with uncultivated mountains, excepting at its foot, where opens a beautiful plain, highly cultivated and dotted with a variety of rude but exceedingly comfortable farm-houses. The shores of Lake Paradox are rocky, the water deep and clear, abounding in fish, and the lines of the mountains are picturesque to an uncommon degree.

But it is time that I should turn from particulars to a general description of the Scaroon country.—Though this is an agricultural region, the two principal articles of export are lumber and iron. Of the former the principal varieties are pine, hemlock, and spruce, and two establishments for the manufacture of iron are abundantly supplied with ore from the surrounding mountains. Potatoes of the finest quality flourish here, also wheat and corn. The people are mostly Americans, intelligent, virtuous, and industrious, and are as comfortable and happy as any in the State.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE ADIRONDAC MOUNTAINS.

JOHN CHENEY'S CABIN.

THE Adirondac Mountains are situated on the extreme head waters of the Hudson, in the counties of Essex and Hamilton, and about forty miles west of Lake Champlain. They vary from five hundred to five thousand feet in height, and with few exceptions, are covered with dense forests. They lord it over the most extensive wilderness region in the Empire State, and as I have recently performed a pilgrimage among them, I now purpose to give an account of what I saw and heard during my expedition.

The tourist who visits these mountains, finds it necessary to leave the mail road near Lyndsey's Tavern, on the Scaroon. If Fortune smiles upon him, he will be able to hire a horse to take him in the interior, or perhaps obtain a seat in a lumber waggon; but if not, he must try the mettle of his legs. With regard to my own case, fortune was non-committal; for while she compelled me to go on foot, she supplied me with a pair of temporary companions, who were going into the interior to see their friends, and have a few days' sport in the way of fishing and hunting. One of my friends (both of whom were young men) was a farmer, who carried a rifle, and the other a travelling country musician, who carried a fiddle. Our first day's tramp took us about fifteen miles, through a hilly. thickly-wooded, and houseless wilderness, to the Boreas river, where we found a ruined log shantee, in which we concluded to spend the night. We reached this lonely spot at about three o'clock in the afternoon; and having previously been told that the Boreas was famous for trout, two of us started after a mess of fish, while the fiddler was appointed to the office of wood-chopper to the expedition. The Boreas at

this point is about one hundred feet broad—winds through a woody valley, and is cold, rapid, and clear. The entire river does not differ materially, as I understand, from the point alluded to, for it waters an unknown wilderness. I bribed my farmer friend to *ascend* the river, and, having pocketed a variety of flies, I started down the stream. I proceeded near half a mile, when I came to a still water pool, which seemed to be quite extensive, and very deep. At the head of it, midway in the stream, was an immense boulder which I succeeded in surmounting, and whence I threw a red hackle for upwards of three hours. I never saw trout jump more beautifully, and it was my luck to basket thirty-four, twenty-one of which averaged three-quarters of a pound, but the remaining thirteen were small. Satisfied with my luck, I returned to the shantee, where I found my companions; one of them sitting before a blazing fire and fiddling, and the other busily employed in cleaning the trout he had taken.

In due time followed the principal event of the day, which consisted in cooking and eating a wilderness supper. We had brought a supply of pork and bread, and each one having prepared for himself a pair of wooden forks, we proceeded to roast our trout and pork before a huge fire, using the drippings of the latter for seasoning, and water for our beverage. We spent the two following hours in smoking and telling stories, and having made a bed of spruce boughs, and repaired the rickety partition which divided one end of the cabin from the other end, which was all open, we retired to repose. We had no blankets with us, and an agreement was therefore entered into, that we should take turns in replenishing the fire during the night. An awfully dark cloud settled upon the wilderness, and by the music of the wind among the hemlock-trees, we were soon lulled into a deep slumber.

A short time after midnight, while dreaming of a certain pair of eyes in the upper part of Broadway, I was awakened by a footstep on the outside of the cabin. I brushed open my eyes, but could see nothing but the faint glimmer of an expiring ember on the hearth. I held my breath, and listened for the mysterious

footstep; I heard it not, but something a little more exciting,—the scratching of a huge paw upon our slender door In an exceedingly short time, I roused my bed-fellows, and told them what I had heard. They thought it must be a wolf, and as we were afraid to drive him away, yet anxious to take his hide, it was resolved that I should hold a match, and the farmer should fire his rifle in the direction of the mysterious noise, which operation was duly performed. A large pine rch was then lighted, the rifle reloaded, and the heroes of the adventure marched into the *outer hall* of the cabin, where we found a few drops of blood, and the muddy tracks of what we supposed to be a wild cat. The rifleman and myself then commissioned the fiddler to make a fire, when we again threw ourselves upon the hemlock couch.

The fiddler attended faithfully to his duty, and in less than twenty minutes he had kindled a tremendous blaze. The brilliant and laughing flame had such an exhilarating influence upon his nerves, that he seized his instrument and commenced playing, partly for the purpose of keeping off the wild animals, but mostly for his own amusement. Then laying aside his fiddle, he began to sing a variety of uncouth, as well as plaintive songs, one of which was vague, but mournful in sentiment, and more wild in melody, as I thought at the time, than any thing I had ever before heard. I could not find out by whom it was written, or what was its exact import; but in the lonely place where we were sleeping, and at that hour, it made a very deep impression on my mind.

But sleep, the "dear mother of fresh thoughts and joyous health," soon folded the singer and his listener in her embrace, and with the rising sun we entered upon the labours of another day. While the fiddler prepared our breakfast out of the few remaining trout, the rifleman went out and killed a large hare, and I took a sketch of the cabin where we had lodged.

After breakfast, we shouldered our knapsacks, and started for the Hudson. We struck this noble river at the embryo city of Tahawus, where we found a log house and an unfinished saw-mill. Here we also discovered a canoe, which we boarded, and navi-

gated the stream to Lake Sanford. This portion of the Hudson is not more than one hundred feet broad, but very deep and picturesque. On leaving our canoe, we made our way up a mountain road, and after walking about four miles, came out upon an elevated clearing, of some two hundred acres, in the centre of which was a solitary log cabin, with a retinue of out-houses, and this was the famous Newcomb Farm.

The attractions of this spot are manifold, for it lies in the vicinity of Moose Lake and Lake Delia, and commands the finest distant prospect of the Adirondac mountains which has yet been discovered.

Moose Lake lies at the west of the farm, and about six miles distant. It is embosomed among mountains, and the fountain head of Cold River, which empties into the St. Lawrence. In form it is so nearly round that its entire shore may be seen at one view; the bottom is covered with white sand, and the water is remarkably cold and clear. Considering its size, it is said to contain more trout than any lake in this wilderness, and it is also celebrated as a watering-place for deer and moose. In fishing from the shore, one of our party caught no less than forty pounds of trout in about two hours. There were two varieties, and they varied from one to two pounds in weight. Our guide to this lake, where we encamped for one night, was Steuben Hewitt, the keeper of Newcomb Farm, who is quite a hunter. This woodsman got the notion into his head that he must have a venison steak for his supper. We had already seen some half-dozen deer walking along the opposite margin of the lake, but Steuben told us that he would wait until after dark to capture his game. He also told us that the deer were in the habit of visiting the wilder lakes of this region at night, for the purpose of escaping the tormenting flies, and as he spoke so confidently of what he intended to accomplish, we awaited his effort with a degree of anxiety. Soon as the quiet night had fairly set in, he shipped himself on board a wooden canoe, (a rickety affair, originally bequeathed to this lake by some departed Indian,) in the bow of which was a fire jack, or torch-holder. Separating this machine from himself, as he sat in the centre of the canoe, was a kind of

screen made of bark, which was sufficiently elevated to allow him to fire his gun from underneath; and in this predicament, with a loaded rifle by his side, did he paddle into the lake. After floating upon the water for an hour, in silence, he finally heard a splashing near the shore, and immediately lighting his torch, he noiselessly proceeded in the direction of the sound, when he discovered a beautiful deer, standing knee deep in the water, and looking at him in stupified silence. The poor creature could discover nothing but the mysterious light, and while standing in the most interesting attitude imaginable, the hunter raised his rifle, and shot it through the heart. In half an hour from that time, the carcass of the deer was hanging on a dry limb near our camp fire, and I was lecturing the hard-hearted hunter on the cruelty of thus capturing the innocent creatures of the forest. To all my remarks, however, he replied, "They were given us for food, and it matters not how we kill them"

Lake Delia, through which you have to pass in going to Moose Lake, lies about two miles west of Newcomb Farm. It is four miles long, and less than one mile in width, and completely surrounded with wood-crowned hills. Near the central portion this lake is narrow, and so shallow that a rude bridge has been thrown across for the accommodation of the farm people. The water under this bridge is only about four feet deep, and this was the only spot in the lake where I followed my favourite recreation. I visited it on one occasion, with my companions, late in the afternoon, when the wind was blowing, and we enjoyed rare sport in angling for salmon trout, as well as a large species of common trout I do not know the number that we took, but I well remember that we had more than we could conveniently carry. Usually, the salmon trout are only taken in deep water, but in this, and in Moose Lake, they seem to be as much at home in shallow as in deep water. On one occasion I visited Lake Delia alone at an early hour in the morning. It so happened that I took a rifle along with me, and while quietly throwing my fly on the old bridge, I had an opportunity of using the gun to some purpose My movements in that lonely place were so exceedingly still, that even the wild animals were not disturbed

by my presence; for while I stood there, a large fat otter made his appearance, and when he came within shooting distance, I gave him the contents of my gun, and he disappeared. I related the adventure to my companions, on my return to the farm, but they pronounced it a "fish story." My veracity was vindicated, however; for, on the following day, they discovered a dead otter on the lake shore, and concluded that I had told the truth.

I must not conclude this chapter without giving my reader an additional paragraph about the Newcomb Farm. My friend Steuben Hewitt's nearest neighbour is eight miles off, and as his family is small, it may be supposed that he leads a retired life. One of the days that I spent at his house, was quite an eventful one with him, for a town election was held there. The electors met at nine o'clock, and the poll closed at five; and as the number of votes polled was *seven*, it may well be imagined that the excitement was intense. But with all its loneliness Newcomb Farm is well worth visiting, if for no other purpose than to witness the panorama of mountains which it commands. On every side but one may they be seen, fading away to mingle their deep blue with the lighter hue of the sky, but the chief among them all is old Tahawus, King of the Adirondacs. The country out of which this mountain rises, is an imposing alpine wilderness; and, as it has long since been abandoned by the red man, the solitude of its deep valleys and lonely lakes for the most part, is now more impressive than that of the far-off Rocky Mountains. The meaning of the Indian word Tahawus is *sky-piercer* or *sky-splitter;* and faithfully describes the appearance of the mountain. Its actual elevation above the level of the sea is five thousand four hundred and sixty-seven feet; Mount Washington, in New Hampshire, is six thousand two hundred and thirty-four, making a difference of only seven hundred and sixty-seven feet in favour of Washington. Though Tahawus is not quite so lofty as its New England brother, yet its form is by far the most picturesque and imposing. Taken together, they are the highest pair of mountains in the Northern states.

Before going one step further, I must allude to what I deem the folly of a certain state geologist, in attempting to name the

prominent peaks of the Adirondac mountains after a brotherhood of living men. If he is to have his way in this matter, the beautiful name of Tahawus will be superseded by that of Marcy, and several of Tahawus' brethren are hereafter to be known as Mounts Seward, Wright, and Young. Now, if this business is not supremely ridiculous, I must confess that I do not know the meaning of that word. A pretty idea, indeed, to scatter to the winds the ancient poetry of the poor Indian, and perpetuate in its place the names of living politicians! For my part, I agree most decidedly with the older inhabitants of the Adirondac wilderness, who look with obvious indifference upon the attempted usurpation of the geologist already mentioned.

For nine months in the year old Tahawus is covered with a crown of snow, but there are spots among its fastnesses where you may gather ice and snow even in the dog-days. The base of this mountain is covered with a luxuriant forest of pine, spruce, and hemlock, while the summit is clothed in a net-work of creeping trees, and almost destitute of the green which should characterise them. In ascending its sides when near their summit, you are impressed with the idea that your pathway may be smooth; but as you proceed, you are constantly annoyed by pitfalls, into which your legs are foolishly poking themselves, to the great annoyance of your back-bone and other portions of your body which are naturally straight.

I ascended Tahawus as a matter of course, and in making the trip I travelled some twenty miles on foot and through the pathless woods, employing for the same the better part of two days. My companion on this expedition was John Cheney (of whom I have something to write hereafter); and, as he did not consider it prudent to spend the night on the summit, we only spent about one hour gazing upon the panorama from the top, and then descended about half-way down the mountain, where we built our watch-fire. The view from Tahawus is rather unique. It looks down upon what appears to be an uninhabited wilderness, with mountains fading to the sky in every direction, and where, on a clear day, you may count not less than twenty-four lakes, including Champlain, Horicon, Long Lake, and Lake Pleasant.

While trying to go to sleep on the night in question, as I lay by the side of my friend Cheney, he gave me an account of the manner in which certain distinguished gentlemen have ascended Mount Tahawus, for it must be known that he officiates as the guide of all travellers in this wild region. Among those to whom he alluded were Ingham and Cole, the artists; and Hoffman and Headley, the travellers. He told me that Mr. Ingham fainted a number of times in making the ascent, but became so excited with all that he saw, he determined to persevere, and finally succeeded in accomplishing the difficult task. "Mr. Hoffman," he said, "in spite of his lameness, would not be persuaded by words that he could not reach the summit, and when he finally discovered that this task was utterly beyond his accomplishment, his disappointment seemed to have no bounds."

The night that I spent on Tahawus was not distinguished by any event more remarkable than a regular built rain-storm. Our canopy was composed of hemlock branches, and our only covering was a blanket. The storm did not set in until about midnight, and my first intimation of its approach was the falling of rain drops directly into my ear, as I snugged up to my bed-fellow for the purpose of keeping warm. Desperate, indeed, were the efforts I made to forget my condition in sleep, as the rain fell more abundantly, and drenched me, as well as my companion, to the very skin. The thunder bellowed as if in the enjoyment of a very happy frolic, and the lightning seemed determined to root up a few trees in our immediate vicinity, as if for the purpose of giving us more room. Finally Cheney rose from his pillow (which was a log of wood), and proposed that we should quaff a little brandy to keep us from catching cold, which we did, and then made another attempt to reach the land of Nod. * * * At the break of day we were awakened from a short but refreshing sleep, by the singing of birds, and when the cheerful moonlight had reached the bottom of the ravines, we were enjoying a comfortable breakfast in the cabin of my friend.

The principal attractions associated with Tahawus, are the Indian Pass, the Adirondac Lakes, the Adirondac iron-works, and the mighty hunter of the Adirondacs, John Cheney. The

Pass, so called, is only an old-fashioned notch between the mountains. On one side is a perpendicular precipice, rising to the height of eleven hundred feet; and, on the other, a wood-covered mountain, ascending far up into the sky, at an angle of forty-five degrees Through this pass flows a tiny rivulet, over which the rocks are so thickly piled, as frequently to form pitfalls that measure from ten to thirty feet in depth Some of these holes are never destitute of ice, and are cool and comfortable even at midsummer. The Pass is nearly half a mile in length, and, at one point, certain immense boulders have come together and formed a cavern, which is called the "meeting-house," and is, perhaps, capable of containing one thousand people The rock on either side of the Pass is a grey granite, and its only inhabitants are eagles, which are very abundant, and occupy the most conspicuous crag in the notch.

The two principal lakes which gem the Adirondac wilderness, are named Sanford and Henderson, after the two gentlemen who first purchased land upon their borders The former is five miles in length, and the latter somewhat less than three, both of them varying in width from half a mile to a mile and a half The mountains which swoop down to their bosoms are covered with forest, and abound in a great variety of large game There is not, to my knowledge, a single habitation on either of the lakes, and the only smoke ever seen to ascend from their lonely recesses, comes from the watch-fire of the hunter, or the encampment of surveyors and tourists The water of these lakes is cold and deep, and moderately supplied with salmon-trout Lake Henderson is admirably situated for the exciting sport of deer-hunting, and though it contains two or three canoes, cannot be entered from the West Branch of the Hudson without making a portage. Through Lake Sanford, however, the Hudson takes a direct course, and there is nothing to impede the passage of a small boat to within a mile of the iron-works, which are located in a valley between the two lakes. The fact is, during the summer there is an extensive business done on Lake Sanford, in the way of "bringing in" merchandise, and "carrying out" the produce of the forge. It was my misfortune to make the inward

passage of the lake in company with two ignorant Irishmen. Their boat was small, heavily laden, very tottleish and leaky. This was my only chance; and on taking my seat with a palpitating heart, I made an express bargain with the men, that they should keep along the shore on their way up. They assented to my wishes, but immediately pulled for the very centre of the lake. I remonstrated, but they told me that there was no danger. The boat was now rapidly filling with water, and though one was baling with all his might, the rascals were determined not to accede to my wishes. The conclusion of the matter was that our shallop became water-logged, and on finally reaching the shore, the merchandise was greatly damaged, and I was just about as wet as I was angry at the miserable creatures, whose obstinacy had not only greatly injured their employers, but also endangered my own plunder as well as my life.

The iron works alluded to above, are located in a narrow valley, and in the immediate vicinity of Lake Henderson, at a place called McIntyre. Some time in the year 1830, a couple of Scottish gentlemen, named Henderson and McIntyre, purchased a large tract of wild land lying in this portion of New York. In the summer following they passed through this wilderness on an exploring expedition, and with the assistance of their Indian guide, discovered that the bed of the valley in question was literally blocked up with iron ore. On making farther investigations, they found that the whole rocky region about them was composed of valuable mineral, and they subsequently established a regular-built iron establishment, which has been in operation ever since. A gentleman named Robinson afterwards purchased an interest in the concern, and it is now carried on by him and Mr. McIntyre, though the principal stockholders are the wife and son of Mr. Henderson, deceased.

The metal manufactured by this company is of the very best quality of bar-iron; and an establishment is now in progress of erection at Tahawus, twelve miles down the river, where a party of English gentlemen intend to manufacture every variety of steel.

The iron works give employment to about one hundred and fifty men, whose wages vary from one to four dollars per day.

The society of the place, you may well imagine, is decidedly original; but the prominent individual, and only remarkable man who resides here, is John Cheney, the mighty hunter of the Adirondacs For an account of this man, the reader will please look into the following chapter.

CHAPTER XIV.

JOHN CHENEY, THE ADIRONDAC HUNTER.

JOHN CHENEY'S CABIN.

JOHN CHENEY was born in New Hampshire, but spent his boyhood on the shores of Lake Champlain, and has resided in the Adirondac wilderness about thirteen years. He has a wife and one child, and lives in a comfortable cabin in the wild village of McIntyre. His profession is that of a hunter, and he is in the habit of spending about one-half of his time in the woods. He is a remarkably amiable and intelligent man, and as unlike the idea I had formed of him as possible I expected, from all that I had heard, to see a huge, powerful, and hairy Nimrod; but, instead of such, I found him small in stature, and bearing more the appearance of a modest and thoughtful student.

The walls of his cosy little house, containing one principal room, are ornamented with a large printed sheet of the Declaration of Independence, and two engraved portraits of Washington and Jackson. Of guns and pistols he has an abundant supply, and also a good stock of all the conveniences for camping among the mountains. He keeps one cow, which supplies his family with all the milk they need; but his favourite animals are a couple of hunting dogs named Buck and Tiger.

As summer is not the time to accomplish much in the way of hunting, my adventures with John Cheney have not been distinguished by any stirring events; we have, however, enjoyed some rare sport in the way of fishing, and obtained some glorious views from the mountain peaks of this region. But the conversation of this famous Nimrod has interested me exceedingly, and wherever we might be, under his own roof, or by the side of our mountain watch-fires, I have kept him busy in recounting his

former adventures. I copied into my note-book nearly every thing he said, and now present my readers with a few extracts relating to his hunting exploits. I shall use his own words as nearly as I can remember them.

* * * *

"I was always fond of hunting, and the first animal I killed was a fox; I was then ten years of age. Even from childhood, I was so in love with the woods that I not only neglected school, but was constantly borrowing a gun, or stealing the one belonging to my father, with which to follow my favourite amusement. He found it a useless business to make a decent boy of me, and in a fit of desperation he one day presented me with a common fowling-piece. I was the youngest of thirteen children, and was always called the black sheep of the family. I have always enjoyed good health, and am forty-seven years of age; but I have now passed my prime, and don't care about exposing myself to any useless dangers.

* * * *

"You ask me if I ever hunt on Sunday; no, sir, I do not. I have always been able to kill enough on week days to give me a comfortable living. Since I came to live among the Adirondacs, I have killed *six hundred deer, four hundred sable, nineteen moose, twenty-eight bears, six wolves, seven wild cats, thirty otter, one panther, and one beaver.*

* * * *

"As to that beaver I was speaking about, it took me three years to capture him, for he was an old fellow, and remarkably cunning. He was the last, from all that I can learn, that was ever taken in the State. One of the Long Lake Indians often attempted to trap him, but without success; he usually found his trap sprung, but could never get a morsel of the beaver's tail; and so it was with me, too; but I finally fixed a trap *under* the water, near the entrance to his dam, and it so happened that he one day stepped into it and was drowned.

* * * *

"I was going to tell you something about my dogs, Buck and Tiger. I've raised some fifty of these animals in my day, but I

never owned such a tormented smart one as that fellow Buck. I believe there's a good deal of the English mastiff in him, but a keener eye than he carries in his head I never saw. Only look at that breast of his; did you ever see a thicker or more solid one? He's handsomely spotted, as you may see, but some of the devilish Lake Pleasant Indians cut off his ears and tail about a year ago, and he now looks rather odd. You may not believe it, but I have seen a good many men who were not half as sensible as that very dog. Whenever the fellow's hungry he always seats himself at my feet and gives three short barks, which is his way of telling me that he would like some bread and meat. If the folks happen to be away from home, and he feels a little sharp, he pays a regular visit to all the houses in the village, and, after playing with the children, barks for a dry crust, which he always receives, and then comes back to his own home. He's quite a favourite among the children, and I've witnessed more than one fight because some wicked little scamp had thrown a stone at him. When I speak to him he understands me just as well as you do. I can wake him out of a sound sleep, and by my saying, 'Buck, go up and kiss the baby,' he will march directly to the cradle and lick the baby's face; and the way he watches that baby when it's asleep, is perfectly curious,—he'd tear you to pieces in three minutes if you were to try to take it away. Buck is now four years old, and though he's helped me to kill several hundred deer, he never lost one for me yet. Whenever I go a hunting, and don't want him along, I have only to say, 'Buck, you must not go,'—and he remains quiet; there's no use in chaining him, I tell you, for he understands his business. This dog never starts after a deer until I tell him to go, even if the deer is in sight. Why 'twas only the other day that Tiger brought in a doe to Lake Colden, where the two had a desperate fight within a hundred yards of the spot where Buck and myself were seated. I wanted to try the metal of Tiger, and told Buck he must not stir, though I went up to the doe to see what the result would be between the fighters. Buck didn't move out of his tracks, but the way he howled for a little taste of blood was perfectly awful. I almost thought the fellow would die in his agony.

Buck is of great use to me, when I am off hunting, in more ways than one. If I happen to be lost in a snow storm, which is sometimes the case, I only have to tell him to go home, and if I follow his tracks I am sure to come out in safety, and when sleeping in the woods at night, I never have any other pillow than Buck's body. As to my black dog, Tiger, he isn't quite two years old yet, but he's going to make a great hunter. I am trying hard now-a-days to break him of a very foolish habit of killing porcupines. Not only does he attack every one he sees, but he goes out to hunt them, and often comes home all covered with their quills. It was only the other day that he came home with about twenty quills working their way into his snout. It so happened, however, that they did not kill him, because he let me pull them all out with a pair of pincers, and that too without budging an inch. About the story people tell, that the porcupine *throws* its quills, I can tell you it's no such thing,—it is only when the quills touch the dog, that they come out and work their way through his body.

* * * *

"As to deer hunting, I can tell you more stories in that line than you'd care about hearing. They have several ways of killing them in this quarter, and some of their ways are so infernal mean. I'm surprised that there should be any deer left in the country. In the first place there's the 'still hunting' fashion, when you lay in ambush near a salt lick, and shoot the poor creatures when they're not thinking of you. And there's the beastly manner of blinding them with a 'torch light' when they come into the lakes to cool themselves, and get away from the flies, during the warm nights of summer. Now I say, that no decent man will take this advantage of wild game, unless he is in a starving condition. The only manly way to kill deer is by 'driving' them, as I do, with a couple of hounds.

"There isn't a creature in this whole wilderness that I think so much of as a deer. They are *so* beautiful, with their bright eyes, graceful necks, and sinewy legs; and they are so swift, and make such splendid leaps when hard pressed; why, I've seen a buck jump from a cliff that was forty feet high, and that, too,

without injuring a hair. I wish I could get my living without killing this beautiful animal!—but I must live, and I suppose they were made to die. The cry of the deer, when in the agonies of death, is the most awful sound I ever heard;—I'd a good deal rather hear the scream of the panther, provided I have a ball in my pistol, and the pistol is in my hand. I wish they would never speak so.

"The time for taking deer is in the fall and winter. It's a curious fact, that when a deer is at all frightened, he cannot stand upon smooth ice, while, at the same time, when not afraid of being caught, he will not only walk, but actually trot across a lake as smooth as glass. It's a glorious sight to see them running down the mountains, with the dogs howling behind; but I don't think I ever saw a more beautiful race than I once did on Lake Henderson, between a buck deer and my dog Buck, when the lake was covered with a light fall of snow. I had put Buck upon a fresh track, and was waiting for him on the lake shore. Presently, a splendid deer bounded out of the woods upon the ice, and as the dog was only a few paces off, he led the race directly across the lake. Away they ran as if a hurricane was after them; crossed the lake, then back again. Then they made another wheel, and having run to the extreme southern point of the lake, again returned, when the deer's wind gave out, and the dog caught and threw the creature, into whose throat I soon plunged my knife, and the race was ended.

"I never was so badly hurt in hunting any animal as I have been in hunting deer. It was while chasing a buck on Cheney's Lake (which was named after me by Mr. Henderson in commemoration of my escape), that I once shot myself in a very bad way. I was in a canoe, and had laid my pistol down by my side, when, as I was pressing hard upon the animal, my pistol slipped under me in some queer way, and went off, sending a ball into my leg, just above the ancle, which came out just below the knee. I knew something terrible had happened, and though I thought that I might die, I was determined that the deer should die first; and I did succeed in killing him before he reached the shore. But, as soon as the excitement was over, the

pain I had felt before was increased a thousand-fold, and I felt as if all the devils in hell were dragging at my leg, the weight and the agony were so great. I had never suffered so before, and I thought it strange. You may not believe it, but when that accident happened, I was fourteen miles from home, and yet, even with that used-up leg, I succeeded in reaching my house, where I was confined to my bed from October until April. That was a great winter for hunting which I missed; but my leg got entirely well, and is now as good as ever.

* * * * *

"The most savage animal that I hunt for among these mountains, is the moose, or caraboo, as I have heard some people call them. They're quite plenty in the region of Long Lake and Lake Pleasant; and if the hunter don't understand their ways, he'll be likely to get killed before he thinks of his danger. The moose is the largest animal of the deer kind, or, in fact, of any kind that we find in this part of the country. His horns are very large, and usually look like a pair of crab-apple trees. He has a long head, long legs, and makes a great noise when he travels; his flesh is considered first-rate, for he feeds upon grass, and the tender buds of the moose maple. He is a rapid traveller, and hard to tire out. In winter they run in herds; and when the snow is deep, they generally live in one particular place in the woods which we call a 'yard.' The crack time for killing them is the winter, when we can travel on the snow with our braided snow shoes.

"I once killed two moose before nine o'clock in the morning. I had been out hunting for tw days, in the winter, and when night came on, I had to camp out near the foot of old Tahawus. When I got up in the morning, and was about to start for home, I discovered a yard, where lay a couple of bull moose. I don't know what they were thinking about, but just as soon as they saw me, they jumped up, and made directly towards the place where I was standing. I couldn't get clear of their ugly feet without running, so I put for a large dead tree that had blown over, and walking to the butt end of it, which was some ten feet high, looked down in safety upon the devils. They seemed to

be very mad about something, and did everything they could to get at me, by running around; and I remember they ran together, as if they had been yoked. I waited for a good chance to shoot, and when I got it, fired a ball clear through one of the animals, into the shoulder of the second. The first one dropped dead as a door nail, but the other took to his heels, and after going about fifty rods, concluded to lie down. I then came up to him, keeping my dogs back for the purpose of sticking him, when he jumped up again, and put after me like lightning. I ran to a big stump, and after I had fairly fixed myself, I loaded again, and again fired, when the fellow tumbled in the snow quite dead. He was eight feet high, and a perfect roarer.

* * * *

"Another animal that we sometimes find pretty plenty in these woods, is the big grey wolf; they are savage fellows, and dangerous to meet with when angry. On getting up early one winter morning, I noticed, in the back part of my garden, what I thought to be a wolf track. I got my gun, called for my dogs, and started on the hunt. I found the fellow in his den among the mountains. I kindled a fire, and smoked him out. I then chased him for about two miles, when he came to bay. He was a big fellow, and my dogs were afraid to clinch in; dogs hate a wolf worse than any other animal. I found I had a fair chance, so I fired at the creature; but my gun missed fire. The wolf then attacked me, and in striking him with my gun, I broke it all to pieces. I was in a bad fix, I tell you, but I immediately threw myself on my back, with my snow shoes above me, when the wolf jumped right on my body, and, probably, would have killed me, had it not been for my dog Buck, who worried the wolf so badly, that the devil left me to fight the dog. While they were fighting with all their might, I jumped up, took the barrel of my gun, and settled it right into the brain of the savage animal. That was the largest wolf ever killed in this wilderness.

* * * *

"One of the hardest fights I ever had in these woods was with a black bear. I was coming from a winter hunt. The snow was very deep, and I had on my snow shoes. It so happened,

as I was coming down a certain mountain, the snow suddenly gave way under me, and I fell into the hole or winter quarters of one of the blackest and largest bears I ever saw. The fellow was quite as much frightened as I was, and he scampered out of the den in a great hurry. I was very tired, and had only one dog with me at the time, but I put after him. I had three several battles with him, and in one of these he struck my hand with such force as to send my gun at least twenty or thirty feet from where we stood. I finally managed to kill the rascal, but not until he had almost destroyed the life of my dog. That was a noble dog; but in that battle he received his death-wound. He couldn't walk at the time, and though I was nine miles from home, I took him up in my arms and carried him; but with all my nursing I could not get him up again, for he died at the end of a few weeks. That dog was one of the best friends I ever had.

* * * *

"But the most dangerous animal in this country is the yellow panther or painter. They are not very plenty, and so tormented cunning that it is very seldom you can kill one. They are very ugly, but don't often attack a man unless cornered or wounded. They look and act very much like a cat, only that they are very large; I never killed but one, and his body was five feet long, and his tail between three and four. At night their eyes look like balls of fire, and when they are after game they make a hissing noise, which is very dreadful to hear. Their scream is also very terrible, and I never saw the man who was anxious to hear it more than once. They are seldom hunted as a matter of business, but usually killed by accident.

"The panther I once killed, I came across in this manner. I was out on Lake Henderson with two men, catching fish through the ice, when we saw two wolves come on the ice in great haste, looking and acting as if they had been pursued. I proposed to the men that we should all go and kill them if we could. They wanted to fish, or were a little afraid, so I took my gun and started after the game. I followed them some distance, when, as they were scaling a ledge, they were attacked by

a big panther, and a bloody fight took place. From the appearance of the animals, I supposed that they had met before, which was the cause why the wolves came upon the lake. During the scuffle between the animals, it is a singular fact that they all three tumbled off the precipice and fell through the air about one hundred feet. The wolves jumped up and ran away, while the panther started in another direction. I followed his track, and after travelling a number of hours, overtook him, and managed to shoot him through the shoulder. He then got into a tree, and as he was lashing his tail and getting ready to pounce upon me, I gave him another ball, and he fell to the earth with a crash, and was quite dead. I then went to the lake and got the men to help me home with my booty."

CHAPTER XV.

THE HERMIT OF AROOSTOOK.

MOUTH OF THE AROOSTOOK.

I WAS on my way down the river St. John, in New Brunswick, and having heard that the Aroostook (one of its principal tributaries) was famous for its salmon and a picturesque waterfall, I had taken up my quarters at a tavern near the mouth of that stream, with a view of throwing the fly for a few days, and adding to my stock of sketches. I arrived at this place in the forenoon, and after depositing my luggage in an upper room, and ordering a dinner, I proceeded to arrange my tackle and pencils for an afternoon expedition. This preparatory business I performed in the sitting-room of the tavern, where there happened to be seated at the time, and reading the New York *Albion*, an oddly-dressed, but gentlemanly-looking man. In form, he was tall, and slender, appeared to be about fifty years of age, and there was such an air of refinement in his appearance and manners that he attracted my particular attention. I said nothing, however, and quietly continued my snelling operations, until summoned to dinner. While at the table, I sent for the landlord to inquire about the stranger whom I had noticed, and his reply was as follows:—"His name is *Robert Egger;* he is a strange but good man, and lives the life of a recluse; his house is above the fall, on the Aroostook, and about four miles from here. He has been in this part of the country for many years, but I seldom see him at my house, excepting when he wants to read the news, put a letter in the office, or purchase a bag of flour."

With this intelligence I was quite delighted, for I fancied that I had discovered a *character*, which eventually proved to

be the case. On returning to the room where the stranger was seated, I introduced myself by offering him a cigar; and while fixing my rod, asked him a few questions about the surrounding country. His replies proved him to be an intelligent man, and as he happened to express himself a lover of the "gentle art," I offered him the use of some fishing tackle, and invited him to accompany me. He refused my offer, but accepted my invitation, and we started for the Aroostook. He officiated as my guide; and when we approached the river, which was from two to five feet deep, about one hundred yards wide, very rapid, and filled with bridge piers in ruin, we jumped into a Frenchman's canoe, and were landed on the northern shore. Here we came into a road which passed directly along the bank of the river; this we followed for one mile, until we arrived at a flour-mill, at the mouth of a large and very beautiful brook, where the road made a sudden turn towards the north. Directly opposite the mill, on the Aroostook side, was a narrow and rapid rift, where, my friend told me, I was sure to hook a salmon. I did not like the appearance of the place, but took his advice and waded in. I tried my luck for some thirty minutes, but could not tempt a single fish. This, my friend did not understand; he said there were salmon there, and thought that the fault was mine. I knew what he wanted, and therefore handed him my rod, that he might try his fortune. He fished for nearly half an hour, and then broke the fly-tip of my rod. As I was cherishing an earnest desire to take at least one salmon, *under the fall*, which I thought the only likely place to succeed, and towards which I had set my face, this little accident made me exceedingly nervous. My friend attempted to console me by remarking, that, as it was getting toward evening, we had better return to the tavern, and take a fresh start in the morning. But this proposition did not suit me at all, and I promptly said so. "Just as you please," replied my companion, and so we repaired the rod, and continued up the river. Very rapid, with many and deep pools, was this portion of the stream; and our course along the shore, over logs and fallen trees, through tangled underbrush, and around rocky points—was attended with every

imaginable difficulty, and so continued for at least two miles. On coming in sight of the fall, however, I was more than amply repaid for all my trouble, by the prospect which there presented itself. It was, perhaps, one hour before sunset, and there was a delightful atmosphere resting upon the landscape. Directly before me, in the extreme distance, and immediately under the crimson sun, was a narrow rocky gorge, through which foamed the waters of the Aroostook, over a precipice of some thirty feet; and just below the fall, rose a perpendicular rock to the height of nearly a hundred feet, dividing the stream into two channels. The entire middle distance of the prospect was composed of a broad and almost circular basin of very deep and dark water, skirted mostly with a rocky shore, while directly across the surface of this pool, winding down the stream, was a line of foam, distinguishing the main channel; while the foreground of this picture consisted of a gravelly beach, two bark wigwams, several canoes, and some half dozen Indians, who were enjoying their evening meal by the side of an expiring fire.

We held a brief conversation with the Indians, and found out that they had visited the basin for the purpose of spearing salmon by torchlight; and while my companion sat down in their midst to rest himself, I jumped into one of the canoes, and paddled to the foot of the fall, to try one of my fancy flies. I fished for about thirty minutes—caught one small salmon—lost two very large ones, and returned to the Indian camp, where I had previously concluded to spend the night, provided my guide did not insist upon returning to the tavern by moonlight. It so happened, however, that my interesting plan was vetoed by my companion, who told me that his dwelling was only a mile off, and that I must go and spend the night with him. I willingly assented to this proposition, and having picked up the salmon, we engaged the Indians to ferry us across the basin, and proceeded on our way. Our path was somewhat narrow, crooked, and intricate, and as I listened to the roaring of the water-fall, and thought of the mystery which hung over my companion, I could not but wonder what I was about, and to what strange place I was going.

In due time, however, we emerged from the woods, and came out upon the side of a gentle hill, which sloped to the margin of the Aroostook. and was sufficiently open to command an extensive view of the river. Here my friend told me to tarry a few moments, for he had a canoe hidden among some willows, and wished to hunt it up that we might recross the river once more. I heard his words, but neglected to assist him, for my whole attention was riveted by the scene upon which I was gazing. The sober livery of twilight had settled upon the world, and the flowing of the river was so peaceful, that I could distinctly hear the hum of unnumbered insects as they sported in the air. On the opposite shore was a lofty forest-covered hill. and at the foot of it a small clearing, in the centre of which stood a rude log cabin --the dwelling-place of my friend. On my left, the river presented the appearance of a lake: and, apparently in the centre of it, were two of the most exquisitely foliaged islands imaginable. The valley seemed completely hemmed in with mountains, and these, together with a glowing sky, were all distinctly mirrored in the sleeping waters. Most charming was this evening landscape, and the holy time "was quiet as a nun, breathless with adoration." But now my companion summoned me to a seat in the canoe, and we passed over the stream in safety; he hauled up his shallop, laid aside his paddle, and, slapping me on the shoulder, led the way to his cabin, repeating, in a loud, clear voice, the following words:—

"Alone I live, between four hills;
Famed Roostook runs between:
At times, wild animals appear,
But men are seldom seen."

On entering the hut, which was now quite dark, as it only contained one window, my companion turned abruptly round, and after making a frolicsome remark about my being in his power, he exclaimed—"That poetry I repeated to you just now was a home-spun article; but as you might fancy something a little more civilized, I would say to you, my young friend, in the language of Wordsworth's Solitary,

"'This is my domain, my cell,
My hermitage, my cabin, what you will—
I love it better than a snail his house;
But now ye shall be feasted with our best.'"

Soon as these words had fallen from his lips, my friend proceeded to collect some wood for a fire, and while I was left to kindle the flame, he seized a tin-pail, and went after some spring water, which, he said, was some distance off. In a few moments, I produced a sufficient quantity of light to answer my purpose, and then took occasion to survey the room into which I had been thus strangely introduced. Every thing about me seemed to be oddity itself. First was the huge fire-place, rudely made of rough stones, and filled with ashes; then the blackish appearance of the log walls around, and the hemlock rafters above. In one corner stood a kind of wooden box, filled with blankets, which answered the purpose of a bed; and in front of the only window in the cabin was a pine table on which stood an inkstand and some writing paper, and under which sat a large grey cat, watching my movements with a suspicious eye. In one place stood a wooden chest, and a half-barrel of meal, and the only things in the room to sit upon, were a couple of wooden chairs. The crevices in the walls were stopped up with rags and clay, and from various rafters depended bundles of mint, hemlock, and other useful productions of the wood. A rusty old gun, and a home-made fishing rod, occupied one corner; and on every side, resting upon wooden pegs, were numerous shelves, of every size and form, which were appropriated to a variety of uses. On one or two of them were the cooking utensils of my friend; on another, a lot of smoky books; and on others, a little of every thing, from a box of salt or paper of tea, down to a spool of thread or a paper of needles.

In a few moments my friend entered the cabin, and immediately began to prepare our evening meal, which consisted of bread, fried pork, salmon, and a cup of tea. Plain was our food, but it was as nicely cooked as if it had been done by a pretty girl, instead of an old man, and the comic pomposity with which every little matter was attended to, afforded me much

amusement. One thing I remember, which struck me as particularly funny. My host was talking about the conduct of Sir Robert Peel and the British Parliament, and while in the midst of his discourse, opened a trap-door leading to his cellar, and descended therein. I knew not what he was after, and waited his re-appearance with some anxiety, when suddenly he bobbed up his ghost-like head, resumed the thread of his remarks, and held forth in one hand a huge piece of fat pork, and as he became excited about the conduct of the prime minister, he occasionally slapped the pork with the remaining hand, and then shook it in the air, as if it had been one of the bloody Irishmen to whom he was occasionally alluding. He reminded me of Shakspeare's grave-digger. I also remember that, when my friend was kneading his bread, the idea entered his head, from some remark that I had dropped, that I did not comprehend the meaning of a certain passage in Shakspeare; so he immediately wiped one of his hands, leaned over for his ragged copy of the mighty bard, and immediately settled the question to our mutual satisfaction.

Supper being ended, I pulled out of my pocket a couple of cigars which I had brought with me, and we then seated ourselves comfortably before the fire, and entered into a systematic conversation. The greater part of the talking was done by my companion, and in the course of the evening, I gathered the following particulars respecting his own history:—

He told me he was a native of Hampshire, England, and had spent his boyhood in the city of London, as a counting-house clerk. He claimed a good name for his family, and added that Mr. Jerdan, formerly editor of the *London Literary Gazette*, was his brother-in-law, having married his only sister. He avowed himself about sixty years of age, and had been a resident of New Brunswick ever since the year 1809. He first came across the Atlantic as a government agent, for the transaction of business connected with the fur trade; and when he settled in the province, the whole country was an untrodden wilderness. Since that time he had followed a variety of employments, had acquired a competence, but lost it through the rascality of friends.

He told me he was a widower, and that he had one son, who resided in Frederickton, and was rapidly acquiring a reputation for his knowledge of engineering. "It does my heart good to remember this fact," continued my friend, "and I do hope that my son will not disgrace his family, as some people seem to think I have done. The God-forsaken inhabitants of this region have a habit of calling me a crazy old man God be praised! I *know* they overshoot the mark in that particular, if I have lost my reason, I can tell the mocking world that I have endured trouble enough to make even a philosopher a raving maniac. By patient and unwearied toil, I have won two small fortunes, but both of them were snatched away, and I was left a beggar. The home government took pity on me, and offered to make me a present of land, adding that I was at liberty to make my own selection I accepted their offer, and selected five hundred acres on the Aroostook, making the fall we visited this evening the centre of my domain. I duly received a deed for the property, and having concluded that my fellow-men were as tired of me as I was of them, I bolted for the wilderness, and have lived here ever since. Yes, sir, for twelve years have I been the only human inmate of this rude cabin; I ought to except, however, 'a lucid interval' of some nine months, which I spent in England, about four years ago, visiting my friends and the favourite haunts of my childhood. To enjoy even that little luxury, I was compelled to sacrifice a portion of my land.

"But why do you not sell your entire property," I remarked, "and take up your abode among men, where your knowledge might be made available?"

"Knowledge, indeed!" replied the hermit philosopher; "all that I possess, you might easily hide in the bowl of an acorn. I do know enough to cast my eyes heavenward, when crushed by misfortune, but the same knowledge was possessed by the worm upon which I accidentally trod this morning. What is man, at his best estate, but a worm. But this is not answering your question. My only reason for not selling this property is, that I cannot find a purchaser. Most gladly would I jump at the chance, and then I *would* mingle with my fellow-men, and

endeavour to be *of* them. Travellers, who sometimes pass through this region, tell me that my property is worth 5000 dollars; I know it to be worth at least that amount, but I should be glad to sell it for 3000 dollars, and that, too, on a credit of ten years. The interest would, indeed, be a meagre income, but I have schooled myself in the ways of poverty; and though it once cost me 2000 dollars, to carry me through a single year, I can tell you that my expenses for the last five years have not averaged more than *twenty dollars*, which I have had to obtain as best I could. But you must not misunderstand me. The little clearing which surrounds my rookery, contains six acres, and as I cultivate them with all diligence, they keep me from actual starvation."

"But it strikes me, my dear sir, that you ask rather an extravagant price for your uncultivated land?" I asked this question with a view of obtaining some information in reference to the valley of the Aroostook, and was not disappointed. The reply of my friend was as follows:—

"I can convince you that you are mistaken. In the first place, the water privilege which my land covers, is acknowledged to be the most valuable on the Aroostook, and I may add that it is abundantly fertile. And then think of the valley, at the very threshold of which I am located! It is one of the most beautiful and luxuriant in this northern wilderness; and the only thing against it, though I say it that should not, is the fact that nearly five miles of its outlet belongs to the English government, while the remainder belongs to the United States. The whole of it ought to be yours; but if it were, I would not live here a year; I am near enough to you now; directly on the boundary line between your country and mine. The Aroostook, I verily believe, is one of the most important branches of the St. John. Its general course is easterly, but it is exceedingly serpentine, and, according to some of your best surveyors, drains upwards of a million acres of the best soil in Maine. Above my place, there is hardly a spot that might not be navigated by a small steamboat, and I believe the time is not far distant when your enterprising Yankees will have a score of

boats employed here, carrying their grain to market. Before that time comes, however, you must dig a canal or build a railroad around my beautiful water-fall, which, I am sure, could be done for 20,000 dollars. An extensive lumbering business is now carried on in the valley, but its future prosperity must depend upon its agriculture. Already are its shores dotted with well-cultivated farms, and every year is adding to their number, and to the rural beauty of those already in existence. The soil of this valley is rich, and composed principally of what is called *alluvial* (not interval) land, together with the quality known as *upland.* In many portions, however, you will find some of the most charming intervals in the world. The trees of this region are similar to those of your northern States. The staple crop of the Aroostook farmer is wheat. Owing to the shortness of our seasons, corn does not arrive at perfection, and its cultivation is neglected. Rye, barley, and oats, all flourish here, but much more buckwheat is raised than any other grain besides wheat. Grasses flourish here in great perfection, and the farmer of Aroostook will yet send to market immense quantities of cattle. As to the climate, it is not so severe as is generally supposed. Snow falls early, and continues late, which prevents the ground from freezing very deep. And when summer comes, as you may testify, the weather is sufficiently warm for every necessary purpose. Now, sir, do you not think I have made out a clear case?" I answered in the affirmative, and thanked him for the information he had given me. Like Oliver Twist, however, I was anxious for "more," and therefore endeavoured to start him on another subject. In this laudable effort I fully succeeded, and by merely expressing the opinion that he must lead a very lonely life in this remote wilderness.

"Not at all, not at all," replied my friend. "It is my good fortune to belong to that class of men who depend upon books, the works of nature, and themselves, for happiness, and not upon a selfish and heartless world. As to my books, they are not very abundant, nor are they bound in fancy morocco; but the substance of them is of the right sort. Foremost among them is the Bible, which tells even a poor devil like me

that he is a man. Perfect in their generation are the truths of this glorious old Book; they have an important bearing upon every thing; and they should be studied and cherished with jealous care. But the earth-born men, with whom I hold daily communion, are the mighty Shakspeare, the splendid Gibbon, the good and loving brother poets Thomson and Wordsworth, the gifted but wayward Burns, the elegant and witty Addison, and the ponderous Johnson. These are the minds which always afford me solid satisfaction. As to the immense herd who keep the printing presses of the present day constantly employed, I know nothing about them, and care still less. And now as to the pleasures which are brought to me by the revolving seasons. They are indeed manifold, and it is pleasant to remember that 'Nature never did betray the heart that loved her.' The hills which surround my cabin I look upon as familiar friends; not only when crowned with a wreath of snow, but when rejoicing in their summer bloom; and a more peaceful and heart-soothing stream can nowhere be found, than the one which flows along by my door; and you know from experience that it abounds in the finest salmon and trout. The surrounding woods furnish me with game, but their greatest treasures are the ten thousand beautiful birds, which make melody in their little hearts, and afford me unalloyed pleasure for at least one half the year. I seldom have occasion to kill these feathered minstrels for food, and the consequence is whenever I go out into my fields to work, they gather around me without fear, and often come so near as to be in my very way. The quail and the wren, the jay and the blue-bird, the mocking-bird, the partridge, the fish-hawk, the eagle, and the crow, and also the swallow, the owl, and whippoorwill, all build their nests within a stone's throw of my door, and they know that the friendless old man will do them no harm. And then, what exquisite pleasure do I continually enjoy in watching the ever-varying changes of the year! First, when the primrose tells me that the rains are over and gone, and I go forth in the refreshing sunshine to sow my seeds; secondly, when the glorious summer is in its prime, with its dewy mornings and lovely twi-lights; also in the sober autumnal time, when I thoughtfully

count the leaves floating on the bosom of the stream; and then again when the cold winds of winter are howling around my cabin, and I sit in my pleasant solitude before a roaring fire, building palaces in my mind, as I peer into the burning embers. Yes, sir, I have learned to live without excitement, and to depend upon myself for the companionship I need. I do, indeed, occasionally steal out of my beautiful vale, and mingle with my fellow-men; but I always return perfectly contented with my lot. After all, I do not believe that the world *could* add greatly to my stock of happiness, even if I were a worshipper of Mammon, a brawling politician, or a responsible statesman."

"But, Mr. Egger, it strikes me that your manner of life is not in keeping with the Bible, for which you have expressed so much reverence?"

"That may be true," was the reply, "but I make no sanctimonious pretensions. I do but little to promote the happiness of my fellow-men, and I congratulate myself with the idea that I do as little to make them miserable. The influence of my example amounts to nothing, and I give no bread to the poor, because I have none to give. But let us drop the subject; I feel that your questions may so annoy me that I shall be compelled to abandon this glorious old wilderness, and become a denizen of the busy and noisy world."

A breach having thus been made in our discourse, I examined my watch, and found it to be near twelve o'clock. My companion took the hint, and immediately proceeded to fix a sleeping place that would accommodate us both. This was done by spreading the clothes of the wooden bedstead upon the floor. While going through this little operation, he held high above his head a ragged old bed-quilt, and asked me what I thought Queen Victoria would say, if she had such an article to rest her royal limbs upon? He then pointed to the particular spot which he wanted me to occupy, giving as a reason for the request, that there was a hole on the opposite side of his mansion, where toads, rats, and weasels, were frequently in the habit of entering, and he was afraid that they might annoy me, though he had never been disturbed by their nocturnal visits. This information

appeared to me somewhat peculiar, but did not prevent me from undressing myself to lie down. When about half through this business, however, I was actually compelled to take a seat on account of a laughing fit brought upon me by one or two stories, which my host related for my special benefit. *What* a strange man, indeed! thought I, and making another effort, I tumbled into bed. In the mean time, my companion had stripped himself of every thing but his shirt, and in spite of the frailty of his "spindle shanks," was throwing himself into the attitudes for which Kemble was distinguished, whose acting he had often witnessed in olden times. I was already quite exhausted with excess of laughter, and I verily believed that the queer antics of the anchorite and philosopher would be the death of me. But I felt that I must go to sleep, and, in self-defence, partly covered my head with the end of a quilt, and almost swore that I would not be disturbed again

I did not swear, however, and was consequently again disturbed. I had just fixed my head upon the pillow, as I thought, for the last time, when I was startled by a tremendous yell proceeding from without the cabin. I rushed out of the house as if the old Harry himself had been after me, and beheld my spare and venerable friend sitting upon a stump, gazing upon the rising moon, and listening to the distant howl of a wolf, with one of his feet dangling to and fro like the pendulum of a clock. "Wasn't that a musical yell, my boy?" were the first words spoken by the hermit mad-cap; and then he went on to point out all the finer features of the scene spread out before us. Silently flowed the stream, grand and sublime looked the mountains, clear and very blue the sky, spirit-like the moon and stars, and above the neighboring water-fall ascended a column of spray, which was fast melting into a snowy cloud. After enjoying this picture for a reasonable time, my companion then proposed that we should enjoy a swim in the river, to which arrangement I assented, even as did the wedding-guest of Coleridge to the command of the Ancient Mariner. Our bath ended, we returned to the cabin, and in the course of half an hour, the hermit and the stranger were side by side in the arms of sleep.

On opening my eyes in the morning, the pleasant sunshine was flooding the floor through the open door, and my friend, who had risen without disturbing me, was frying some trout which he had just taken in the stream. I arose, rolled up the bed, and prepared myself for breakfast, which was particularly relished by the giver and the receiver. I spent the forenoon rambling about the estate of my old friend, and enjoying the surrounding scenery; I then proposed to him that he should go down and be my guest at the tavern on the St. John for a day or two, which invitation was accepted. On my return, I took a sketch of the secluded vale where stands the cottage of my friend, also a profile of his own handsome face, and a view of his water-fall. The time of my departure having arrived, I left my friend with a heavy heart for my distant city-home, while he returned to his solitary cottage among the mountains.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE RIVER ST. JOHN.

WOODSTOCK.

I HAVE recently performed a pilgrimage along the valley of the lower St. John, and as I am about to leave the river, it is meet that I should give my reader a record of my observations. The distance from the Falls of St. John to the city of that name, is two hundred and twenty miles. The width of the river varies from a quarter of a mile to two miles, and the depth from two to forty feet. That portion lying north of Frederickton abounds in rapids and shallows, and is navigated only by flat-bottomed boats, which are taken up stream by horse power, but descend with the current. Here, for the most part, the shores are mountainous, and only partly cultivated, with high and picturesque banks; the lowest portion, however, is of a level character, and presents the appearance of an ancient and highly-cultivated country, and is navigated by steamboats, and the common sail-craft of the country. The soil all along the shores is good, but seems better adapted for grass than wheat, and I can see no good reason for its not becoming greatly distinguished as a grazing country.

The river St. John is not remarkable for any pictorial features of consequence (though it abounds in beautiful landscapes,) excepting a place called the Narrows, for this seems to be a popular name, situated at the southern extremity. At this point the stream is not more than five hundred yards wide, and as it is bounded on either side by a high rocky barrier, the current ordinarily passes through with great rapidity. The tides of the ocean ascend about thirty miles, and it is only when the

water is high that the point in question can be navigated. Though these Narrows are a great annoyance to the navigator, by the lover of the picturesque they are highly esteemed. Not only are they beautiful in themselves, but, owing to the peculiarity of the place, it is frequently the case, that the broad expanse of water above it is covered with a fleet of sloops, schooners, steamboats, towboats, and timber-crafts, which present a peculiar and agreeable panorama. The river abounds with salmon and shad, and the former, though rather small, may be taken by the angler in the principal tributaries. They are not sufficiently abundant, however, to constitute an important article of commerce, and the common modes of taking them are with the spear and the drift net.

The principal towns on the St. John are, Woodstock, French Village, Frederickton, and St. John. The first of these is one hundred and fifty miles from the mouth, and though a ragged, yet an interesting village. So far as its natural productions are concerned, I am disposed to compliment this province in the highest terms; but I must say, that the ignorance, idleness, and gouging character of its common people, have made me quite willing to take my departure therefrom. The expenses of travelling are enormous. Stage fares average about twelve cents per mile; and if you happen to spend a week at a miserable country tavern, you will have to pay two dollars per day for board. With a few exceptions, there is hardly a *country* tavern in the province where the traveller is not in danger of being robbed. It was my good fortune to be robbed only twice, but I was particularly fortunate. This is rather severe, but I am driven to talk in this strain, though I would not be understood as reflecting upon the better classes of the province.

The stage route from the Grand Falls to St. John passes through Woodstock, but the distance from this place to the American town of Houlton is ten miles, and in this direction there is also an established stage route to Bangor.

The next place on the St. John, of any note, is French Village. It usually contains a thousand souls—most of them Indians. They live in frame and log houses, and though they pretend to

do some farming, they are chiefly engaged in hunting and fishing. They are a good-looking race, speak English fluently, and are the followers of a Catholic priest. who lives among them, and officiates in a small chapel which was built by the Jesuits at an early day. This society is said to be one of the most wealthy in the province. The chief of the village is one Louis Beir. He lives in a very comfortable and well-furnished house, is rather a handsome man, dresses in a half savage manner, and while he offers his visiter a comfortable chair, he invariably seats himself upon the floor in the true Indian fashion.

Frederickton is at the head of the steamboat navigation, and distant from St. John eighty miles. Between these two places there runs a morning and evening boat, and the summer travel is very extensive. Frederickton contains about six thousand inhabitants, composed, principally, of Irish, Scotch, and English. There are three principal streets, running north and south, and some half-dozen handsome public buildings, including an Episcopal church, after the Tuscan order, a court house, and a college. The town is situated on a level plain, and its suburbs are made exceedingly beautiful by the number of rural residences which attract the eye in every direction. The elm and poplar both seem to flourish here, and add much to the picturesqueness of the place and vicinity. The business of Frederickton is only of a second-rate character, and it has become what it is, merely from the fact that it has heretofore been the seat of government. This fact has also had a tendency to collect a good society in the place, and its "ton," though in a small way, have been disposed to cut quite a dash. The "mother Parliament," I believe, has recently removed the seat of government to St. John, and the lovers of Frederickton are sorry and a little angry.

The city of St. John stands at the mouth of the river of that name, and is also laved by the waters of the Bay of Fundy. I hate cities, but suppose that I must stop a moment in the one alluded to. It is a business place, planted among rocks, contains some twenty thousand inhabitants, (two-thirds of whom are Irish,) and in this port at the present time, is moored a fleet of two hundred ships. Its public buildings are numerous, the finest of

which are the court-house, an Episcopal church of the Doric order, another after the Gothic, and a Presbyterian church after the Corinthian order. The city is defended by a fortress, which presents a handsome appearance as you approach the port. The merchants of the place are chiefly employed in the square timber trade, and have, heretofore, done an extensive business. This trade, however, I am inclined to believe, is rapidly running out. On the opposite side of the St. John river is a picturesque point or hill, which is called Carlton Hill. It is surmounted by a massive block-house, and commands an extensive view of the Bay of Fundy, the spring tides of which rise to the height of sixty feet, and when coming in, make a terrible roar.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE FEMALE HERMIT OF THE ALLEGHANIES.

MOUTH OF SENECA CREEK, PENDLETON COUNTY.

MY ride from Moorfield to this place, a distance of thirty miles, has been very interesting. The ten miles of road lying between that place and Petersburg runs nearly all the way through a rich bottom land, with nothing in particular, however, to rivet the attention but a picturesque bluff, on the summit of which the rocks have been so curiously piled as to resemble two pieces of statuary, representing a crouching panther and a running deer. At the base of this bluff is a fording place, in crossing which a man was once thrown from his horse, and, having been drowned, his body was subsequently found in a neighbouring pool of the South Potomac, standing erect, with both arms extended as if in supplication.

I spent a night with my companions in the dingy-looking hamlet of Petersburg, where I picked up the following particulars respecting an almost obsolete custom peculiar to this section of the country. It is termed *running for the bottle*, and is a kind of interlude or episode in a marriage celebration. When a buxom lady is about to be married, every body is invited to the wedding, and two entire days are devoted to feasting and dancing, when the time arrives that she is to be taken to the residence of her lord and master. This change of location is accomplished on horseback, and the groom and bride are invariably accompanied by their guests, who combine to form, as they journey in pairs, a truly imposing cavalcade, varying, according to circumstances, from one to two hundred persons. The day of the march is of course a pleasant one, and the journey to be accomplished

is perhaps five miles. At the residence of the groom every thing is in a state of preparation for the reception of the party; and with especial care, a bottle of choice liquor, richly decked out with ribands, has been prepared, and placed upon a high post at the front gate of the dwelling. While the cavalcade are on the move, and have arrived within one mile of the desired haven, the master of ceremonies steps aside upon his horse, and extends an invitation to all the gentlemen present to join in a race for the bottle, which is known to be in waiting for the winner of the race, whose privilege it will be to drink the health of the bride on her arrival. Fifty of the younger men in the party have perhaps accepted the invitation extended to them, and, leaving the procession, they make ready and start off at full speed for the much-desired bottle. The road is winding, and perhaps stony, and stumpy, and muddy; but what matter? Away they fly, like a party of Indians after buffaloes; while along the road, it may be, cattle are bellowing, sheep bleating, dogs barking, hens cackling, and crows cawing. The goal is now in sight; one effort more, and the foremost horseman is at the gate, and has received into his hands from the hands of the groom's sister the much-desired bottle; and then ascend the huzzas and shoutings of that portion of the people assembled to welcome the bride. Meanwhile the cavalcade comes in sight, headed as before by the groom and bride, and, as they approach the gate, the winner of the bottle steps forth upon his horse, and, pouring a portion of liquor into a goblet, presents it to the bride, and has the satisfaction of being the first to drink the good health of her newly-married ladyship. The huzzas and shoutings continue, when, in the midst of the direst confusion, the ladies are assisted into the house, the horses are stabled, and a regular siege of two or three days' dancing and feasting and carousing succeeds, with which the wedding is terminated.

The road from Petersburg to this place runs along the north fork of the South Potomac, a wild and roaring but very beautiful mountain stream. The river itself is exceedingly serpentine, but the road is vastly more so, and we had to ford the former at least thirty times, often, too, exposed to considerable danger. The

scenery throughout the entire route is truly superb, fully equal, in fact, in many particulars, to that of the White and Adirondac mountains. The hills are covered with forests of luxuriant growth, rise in many places to the height of at least three thousand feet, and for many miles present perpendicular walls from five hundred to fifteen hundred feet high. The three most imposing of the natural structures here seen are known as the *Golding Gorge*, the *Fire Cliff*, and the *Seneca Chasm*. They are all of such a character as to be *unpaintable* by words; they are indeed magnificent and wonderful to a remarkable degree. The first, for example, located some ten miles from the mouth of the north fork, is a massive and narrow opening, through which the stream forces itself with a stupendous bluff, on the left hand, hanging or toppling over the stream. The second, four miles further off on the left, is a perpendicular but narrow, and perfectly bare ridge of slate and sandstone towers and turrets, looming against the sky to the height of more than a thousand feet; and, at the time I beheld it, the mountain, of which it forms a part, was on fire, so that the picture which the whole presented was most magnificent. The third, which is directly at the mouth of Seneca creek, resembles the second in its general formation, but is more lofty and fairy-like, gorgeous in the blended colours of the rainbow, and more frowning and overhanging in some of its phases.

Delighted, however, and deeply impressed, as I have been by the scenery of this Alpine land, I have been far more interested by an old woman, whom I have had the pleasure of seeing. Her name is *Elizabeth Golding*, or *Goldizon*, and she resides in a log cabin, entirely alone, directly at the foot of the gorge which has taken her name. She is of German origin, and represents herself as *one hundred and twelve years of age*. She was born, according to her own words, "within a two days' ride of Philadelphia, in Pennsylvania, and her father was a soldier in the revolution under Washington, and she herself was in the immediate vicinity of the American camp at the defeat of Gen. Braddock, of which event she habitually recounts a great number of interesting and thrilling incidents, closing each paragraph with

the remark that the battle field was wet, very wet, with blood. She has been husbandless and childless for nearly half a century, and for many years has lived, as now, in the solitude of the mountains, utterly alone. Indeed, every thing about the old woman is peculiar and strange. She is small in stature, and her hair (which is white as snow) is very long; when engaged in conversation, her countenance fires up, and she accompanies each sentence with the most animated gestures; her voice, though still strong, is altogether beyond her control, having an unnatural tone; and the wrinkles running entirely over her face and neck, are as deep as we might imagine them to be after having been furrowed by the tears of even one heart for so long a time as a century. She was clothed in the simplest manner, having upon her head a cap made of common brown cotton, a frock of blue homespun cloth, and upon her feet nothing but woollen socks. During the whole time that we were in her cabin she was smoking some bitter weed in a corn-cob pipe, and, though haggard and worn to a marvellous degree, she had a pleasant smile; and when either of her guests happened to utter something that was novel to her ear, she would exclaim, "Oh yes, that is wonderful!" Her only means of subsistence for years past had been obtained by making hickory brooms; but even this business she had been compelled to give up, for she could no longer climb the mountains to obtain the proper material; and, though she seemed to be perfectly certain that she would be provided for, she expressed the greatest dread of the county almshouse. We inquired as to her appetite, and she replied, "Oh, I eats very little; I never eat much, sometimes nothing in a whole day, and never more than once a day, and I am well acquainted with hunger." As to her sleep we also questioned her, and she said, "That's what troubles me most; I cannot sleep now I am so old, and so I lie on my bed all night thinking of my *great, good, and sweet Father in the Heavens.*" We asked her how she managed to obtain the necessaries of life, and she said she did not know, only that people who travelled on the road sometimes stepped in to give her a little coffee or flour, her main stay being a small garden of vegetables, the

bush fence around which had been built by her own hands; and this garden was the neatest one that I ever beheld. As to her sight, it was as good as ever, and she was unacquainted with the use of spectacles. We asked her how much money she would want to support her for a year, and she replied that *ten dollars* would take care of her a long time more than a year. As a matter of course, my companions and I made up a little purse for her benefit; and when we gave it to her it seemed as if she would embrace us in spite of us. Indeed, we made her a number of trifling presents, and she expressed her gratitude by weeping, and assuring us that her "Father in the Heavens" would bless us and make us happy wherever we might go. And I can assure the reader that the tears shed by that old woman of *five score years and ten* were not the only ones that sprung into the eyes on that occasion, albeit we were unused to weeping.

But I have not yet given the reader an idea of the home of this lonely being: in truth, it baffles description. Her nearest neighbour is some four miles off, and her only companions in her solitude are a little dog and a cat. Her cabin stands near the water's edge, and directly on the hill-side; it is without a window, but light in abundance comes in from the gaping roof and sides of the black and mouldering log habitation, the chimney to which is of mud and sticks, and in a dilapidated condition. Her bedstead is made of small pine sticks, with the bark still on; her couch, consisting of hemlock boughs covered with straw, upon which are two or three wretchedly worn bed-quilts; in one corner of the room are two or three shelves, where are displayed her cooking and eating utensils, the original cost of which (and they were very old and worn) could not have been more than one dollar. An old stool answers the purpose of a chair, and a board nailed to the side of the cabin is her only table; hanging from the logs at the side of her bed are two or three old gowns, which help to keep out the air and the rain; she is also the owner of a spinning wheel; and from the crevices of the logs around, above, and every where, depend bunches of herbs and faded flowers which she has gathered in her rambles; but there was a taste and neatness displayed in the arrangement of the miserable furniture of

the room which gave it a really cheerful aspect. We asked the old woman if she never apprehended any danger while thus living so utterly alone, and she replied, "Of course not; who would harm a poor forsaken being like me? I ain't afraid even of the bears, for it's only last fall that one came down here, and scratched up my garden, but I drove him off with a big stick." Up to this point, every thing we saw and heard concerning this aged woman was strange, but, when we rose to depart, we were still more astonished by her wild movements and her address to the following effect:—

"Men, I thank you for your goodness: I cannot read, but my Great Father, has told me, in my heart, all about it. There is a Heaven, men, and it's a very happy place; and there is a hell, men, and it's a very dreadful place: they both will never have an end. Now, men, good bye; you have been good to the old woman, but we must part; good bye; we shall meet once more, at the judgment, but for only a short time. Live, men, so that you may get to Heaven."

And so we left this strange, strange being; and I am confident that long after her bones shall have mingled with the dust, one trio of travellers, if still living, will remember with wonder and pleasure their interview with the *Hermit Woman of the Alleghanies.*

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE FALLS OF TALLULAH.

GEORGIA.

As a natural curiosity, the *Falls of Tallulah* are on a par with the River Saguenay and the Falls of Niagara. They had been described to me in the most glowing and enthusiastic manner, and yet the reality far exceeds the scene which I had conceived. They have filled me with astonishment, and created a feeling strong enough almost to induce me to remain within hearing of their roar for ever.

The Cherokee word *Tallulah*, or *Tarrurah*, signifies *the terrible*, and was originally applied to the river of that name on account of its fearful falls. This river rises among the Alleghany mountains, and is a tributary of the Savannah. Its entire course lies through a mountain land, and in every particular it is a mountain stream, narrow, deep, clear, cold, and subject to every variety of mood. During the first half of its career it winds among the hills, as if in uneasy joy, and then for several miles it wears a placid appearance, and you can scarcely hear the murmur of its waters. Soon, however, tiring of this peaceful course, it narrows itself for an approaching contest, and runs through a chasm whose walls, about four miles in length, are for the most part perpendicular; and, after making within the space of half a mile a number of leaps, as the chasm deepens, it settles into a turbulent and angry mood, and so continues for a mile and a half further, until it leaves the chasm and regains its wonted character. The Falls of Tallulah, properly speaking, are five in number, and have been christened *Lodora*, *Tempesta*, *Oceana*, *Honcon*, and *the Serpentine*. Their several heights are said to be forty-five feet, one hundred, one hundred and twenty, fifty,

and thirty feet, making, in connection with the accompanying rapids, a descent of at least four hundred feet within the space of half a mile. At this point the stream is particularly winding, and the cliffs of solid granite on either side, which are perpendicular, vary in height from six hundred to nine hundred feet, while the mountains which back the cliffs reach an elevation of perhaps fifteen hundred feet. Many of the pools are very large and very deep, and the walls and rocks in their immediate vicinity are always green with the most luxuriant mosses. The vegetation of the whole chasm is, in fact, particularly rich and varied; and you may here find not only the pine, but specimens of every variety of the more tender trees, together with lichens, and vines, and flowers, which would keep the botanist employed for half a century. Up to the present time, only four paths have been discovered leading to the margin of the water, and to make either of these descents requires much of the nerve and courage of the samphire-gatherer. Through this immense gorge a strong wind is ever blowing, and the sunlight never strikes the cataracts without forming beautiful rainbows, which contrast strangely with the surrounding gloom and horror; and the roar of the waterfalls, eternally ascending to the sky, falls upon the ear like the voice of God calling upon man to wonder and admire.

Of the more peculiar features which I have met with in the Tallulah chasm, the following are the only ones which have yet been christened, viz. the Devil's Pulpit, the Devil's Dwelling, the Eagle's Nest, the Deer Leap, Hawthorn's Pool, and Hanck's Sliding Place.

The Devil's Pulpit is a double-headed and exceedingly ragged cliff, which actually hangs over the ravine, and is estimated to be above six hundred feet high. While standing upon the brow of this precipice I saw a number of buzzards sitting upon the rocks below, and appearing like a flock of blackbirds. While looking at them, the thought came into my mind that I would startle them from their fancied security by throwing a stone among them. I did throw the stone, and with all my might too, but, instead of going across the ravine, as I supposed it would, it fell out of my sight, and, apparently, at the very base of the cliff

upon which I was standing. This little incident gave me a realizing sense of the immense width and depth of the chasm. While upon this cliff also, with my arms clasped around a small pine tree, an eagle came sailing up the chasm in mid air, and as he cast his eye upward at my insignificant form, he uttered a loud shriek, as if in anger at my temerity, and continued on his way, swooping above the spray of the waterfalls.

The *Devil's Dwelling* is a cave of some twenty feet in depth, which occupies a conspicuous place near the summit of a precipice overlooking the Honcon Fall. Near its outlet is a singular rock, which resembles (from the opposite side of the gorge) the figure of a woman in a sitting posture, who is said to be the wife, or better half, of the devil. I do not *believe* this story, and cannot therefore endorse the prevailing opinion.

The *Eagle's Nest* is a rock which projects from the brow of a cliff reputed to be seven hundred feet high, and perpendicular. The finest view of this point is from the margin of the water, where it is grand beyond conception. To describe it with the pen is utterly impossible, but it is just such a scene as would have delighted the lamented Cole, and by a kindred genius alone can it ever be placed on the canvas.

The *Deer Leap* is the highest cliff in the whole chasm, measuring about nine hundred feet, and differing from its fellows in two particulars. From summit to bottom it is almost without a fissure, or an evergreen, and is remarkably smooth; and over it, in the most beautiful manner imaginable, tumbles a tiny stream, which scatters its water upon the rocks below with infinite prodigality; the purest of diamonds and pearls appearing to be woven into wreaths of foam. It obtained its name from the circumstance that a deer was once pursued to this point by a hound, and in its terror, cleared a pathway through the air, and perished in the depths below.

Hawthorn's Pool derives its name from the fact that in its apparently soundless waters, a young and accomplished English clergyman lost his life while bathing; and *Hanck's Sliding Place* is so called because a native of this region once slipped off the rock into a sheet of foam, but by the kindness of Providence he

was rescued from his perilous situation, not much injured, but immensely frightened.

But of all the scenes which I have been privileged to enjoy in the Tallulah chasm, the most glorious and superb was witnessed in the night time. For several days previous to my coming here the woods had been on fire, and I was constantly on the watch for a night picture of a burning forest. On one occasion, as I was about retiring, I saw a light in the direction of the Falls, and determined that I would take a walk to the Devil's Pulpit, which was distant from my tarrying-place some hundred and fifty yards. As soon as I reached that place I felt convinced that the fire would soon be in plain view, for I was on the western side of the gorge, and the wind was blowing from the eastward. In a very few moments my anticipations were realized, for I saw the flame licking up the dead leaves which covered the ground, and also stealing up the trunk of every dry tree in its path.

A warm current of air was now wafted to my cheek by the breeze, and I discovered with intense satisfaction that an immense dead pine which hung over the opposite precipice (and whose dark form I had noticed distinctly pictured against the crimson background,) had been reached by the flame, and in another moment it was entirely in a blaze. The excitement which now took possession of my mind was absolutely painful; and, as I threw my arms around a small tree, and peered into the horrible chasm, my whole frame shook with an indescribable emotion. The magnificent torch directly in front of me did not seem to have any effect upon the surrounding darkness, but threw a ruddy and death-like glow upon every object in the bottom of the gorge. A flock of vultures which were roosting far down in the ravine were frightened out of their sleep, and in their dismay, as they attempted to rise, flew against the cliffs and amongst the trees, until they finally disappeared; and a number of bats and other winged creatures were winnowing their way in every direction. The deep black pools beneath were enveloped in a more intense blackness, while the foam and spray of a neighbouring fall were made a thousandfold more beautiful than before. The vines, and lichens, and mosses, seemed to cling more closely than usual to their parent rocks;

and when an occasional ember fell from its great height far down, and still farther into the abyss below, it made me dizzy, and I retreated from my commanding position. In less than twenty minutes from that time the fire was exhausted, and the pall of night had settled upon the so lately brilliant chasm, and no vestige of the truly marvellous scene remained but an occasional wreath of smoke fading away into the upper air.

During my stay at the Falls of Tallulah I made every effort to obtain an Indian legend or two connected with them, and it was my good fortune to hear one which has never yet been printed. It was originally obtained by the white man who first discovered the Falls from the Cherokees, who lived in this region at the time. It is in substance as follows: Many generations ago it so happened that several famous hunters, who had wandered from the west towards what is now the Savannah river, in search of game, never returned to their camping grounds. In process of time the curiosity as well as the fears of the nation were excited, and an effort was made to ascertain the cause of their singular disappearance. Whereupon a party of medicine-men were deputed to make a pilgrimage towards the great river. They were absent a whole moon, and, on returning to their friends, they reported that they had discovered a dreadful fissure in an unknown part of the country, through which a mountain torrent took its way with a deafening noise. They said that it was an exceedingly wild place, and that its inhabitants were a species of *little men and women*, who dwelt in the crevices of the rocks, and in the grottos under the waterfalls. They had attempted by every artifice in their power to hold a council with the little people, but all in vain; and, from the shrieks they frequently uttered, the medicine-men knew that they were the enemies of the Indian race; and, therefore, it was concluded by the nation at large that the long-lost hunters had been decoyed to their death in the dreadful gorge which they called Tallulah. In view of this little legend, it is worthy of remark that the Cherokee nation, previous to their departure for the distant west, always avoided the Falls of Tallulah, and were seldom found hunting or fishing in their vicinity.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HUNTER OF TALLULAH.

TALLULAH FALLS, GEORGIA.

THE subject of my present letter is Adam Vandever, "the Hunter of Tallulah." His fame reached my ears soon after arriving at this place, and, having obtained a guide, I paid him a visit at his residence, which is planted directly at the mouth of the Tallulah chasm. He lives in a log-cabin, occupying the centre of a small valley, through which the Tallulah river winds its wayward course. It is completely hemmed in on all sides by wild and abrupt mountains, and is one of the most romantic and beautiful nooks imaginable. Vandever is about sixty years of age, small in stature, with a weasel face, a small grey eye, and wears a long white beard. He was born in South Carolina, spent his early manhood in the wilds of Kentucky, and the last thirty years of his life in the wilderness of Georgia. By way of a frolic, he took part in the Creek war, and is said to have killed more Indians than any other white man in the army. In the battle of Ottassee alone, he is reported to have sent his rifle-ball through the hearts of twenty poor heathens, merely because they had an undying p ssion for their native hills, which they could not bear to leave for an unknown wilderness. But Vandever aimed his rifle at the command of his country, and of course the charge of cold-blooded butchery does not rest upon his head. He is now living with his *third* wife, and claims to be the father of *over thirty children*, only five of whom, however, are living under his roof, the remainder being dead or scattered over the world. During the summer months he tills, with his own hand, the few acres of land which constitute his domain.

His live stock consists of a mule, some half dozen goats, and several dogs.

On inquiring into his forest life, he gave me the following particulars. When the hunting season commences, early in November, he supplies himself with every variety of shooting materials, steel-traps, and a comfortable stock of provisions, and, placing them upon his mule, starts for some wild region among the mountains, where he remains until the following spring. The shanty which he occupies during this season, is of the rudest character, with one side always open, as he tells me, for the purpose of having an abundance of fresh air. In killing wild animals, he pursues but two methods, called "fire-lighting," and "still-hunting." His favourite game is the deer, but he is not particular, and secures the fur of every four-legged creature which may happen to cross his path. The largest number of skins that he ever brought home at one time was six hundred,—among which were those of the bear, the black and grey wolf, the panther, the wild-cat, the fox, the coon, and some dozen other varieties. He computes the entire number of deer that he has killed in his lifetime at four thousand. When spring arrives, and he purposes to return to his valley-home, he packs his furs upon his old mule, and, seating himself upon the pile of plunder, makes a bee-line out of the wilderness. And, by those who have seen him in this homeward-bound condition, I am told that he presents one of the most curious and romantic pictures imaginable. While among the mountains, his beast subsists upon whatever it may happen to glean in its forest rambles, and, when the first supply of his own provisions is exhausted, he usually contents himself with wild game, which he is often compelled to devour unaccompanied with bread or salt. His mule is the smallest and most miserable-looking creature of the kind that I ever saw, and glories in the singular name of "The Devil and Tom Walker." When Vandever informed me of this fact, which he did with a self-satisfied air, I told him that the first portion of the mule's name was more applicable to himself than to the dumb beast; whereupon he "grinned horribly a ghastly smile," as if I had paid him a compliment.

Old Vandever is an illiterate man, and when I asked him to give me his opinion of President Polk, he replied: "I never seed the governor of this state; for, when he came to this country, some years ago, I was off on 'tother side of the ridge, shooting deer. I voted for the general, and that's all I know about him." Very well! and this, thought I, is one of the freemen of our land, who help to elect our rulers!

On questioning my hunter friend with regard to some of his adventures, he commenced a rigmarole narrative, which would have lasted a whole month, had I not politely requested him to keep his mouth closed while I took a portrait of him in pencil. His stories all bore a strong family-likeness, but were evidently to be relied on, and proved conclusively that the man knew not what it was to fear.

As specimens of the whole, I will outline a few. On one occasion he came up to a large grey wolf, into whose head he discharged a ball. The animal did not drop, but made its way into an adjoining cavern, and disappeared. Vandever waited awhile at the opening, and as he could not see or hear his game, he concluded that it had ceased to breathe, whereupon he fell upon his hands and knees, and entered the cave. On reaching the bottom, he found the wolf alive, when a "clinch fight" ensued, and the hunter's knife completely severed the heart of the animal. On dragging out the dead wolf into the sunlight, it was found that his lower jaw had been broken, which was probably the reason why he had not succeeded in destroying the hunter.

At one time, when he was out of ammunition, his dogs fell upon a large bear, and it so happened that the latter got one of the former in his power, and was about to squeeze it to death. This was a sight the hunter could not endure, so he unsheathed his huge hunting-knife and assaulted the black monster. The bear tore off nearly every rag of his clothing, and in making his first plunge with the knife he completely cut off two of his own fingers instead of injuring the bear. He was now in a perfect frenzy of pain and rage, and in making another effort succeeded to his satisfaction, and gained the victory. That bear weighed three hundred and fifty pounds.

On another occasion, he had fired at a large buck near the brow of a precipice some thirty feet high, which hangs over one of the pools in the Tallulah river. On seeing the buck drop, he took it for granted that he was about to die, when he approached the animal for the purpose of cutting its throat. To his great surprise, however, the buck suddenly sprang to his feet and made a tremendous rush at the hunter with a view of throwing him off the ledge. But what was more remarkable, the animal succeeded in its effort, though not until Vandever had obtained a fair hold of the buck's antlers, when the twain performed a summerset into the pool below. The buck made its escape, and Vandever was not seriously injured in any particular. About a month subsequent to that time he killed a buck, which had a bullet wound in the lower part of its neck, whereupon he concluded that he had finally triumphed over the animal which had given him the unexpected ducking.

But the most remarkable escape which old Vandever ever experienced happened on this wise. He was encamped upon one of the loftiest mountains in Union county. It was near the twilight hour, and he had heard the howl of a wolf. With a view of ascertaining the direction whence it came, he climbed upon an immense boulder-rock (weighing, perhaps, fifty tons), which stood on the very brow of a steep hill-side. While standing upon this boulder he suddenly felt a swinging sensation, and to his astonishment he found that it was about to make a fearful plunge into the ravine half a mile below him. As fortune would have it, the limb of an oak tree drooped over the rock; and, as the rock started from its foundation, he seized the limb, and thereby saved his life. The dreadful crashing of the boulder, as it descended the mountain side, came to the hunter's ear while he was suspended in the air, and by the time it had reached the bottom he dropped himself *on the very spot* which had been vacated by the boulder. Vandever said that this was the only time in his life when he had been really frightened; and he also added, that for one day after this escape he did not care a finger's snap for the finest game in the wilderness.

While on my visit to Vandever's cabin, one of his boys came

home from a fishing expedition, and on examining his fish I was surprised to find a couple of *shad* and three or four *striped bass*, or *rock-fish*. They had been taken in the Tallulah, just below the chasm, by means of a wicker-net, and at a point distant from the ocean at least two hundred and fifty miles. I had been informed that the Tallulah abounded in trout, but I was not prepared to find saltwater fish in this remote mountain wilderness.

Since I have introduced the above youthful Vandever to my readers, I will record a single one of his deeds, which ought to give him a fortune, or at least an education. The incident occurred when he was in his twelfth year. He and a younger brother had been gathering berries on a mountain side, and were distant from home about two miles. While carelessly tramping down the weeds and bushes, the younger boy was bitten by a rattlesnake on the calf of his leg. In a few moments after the unhappy child fell to the ground in great pain, and the pair were of course in great tribulation. The elder boy, having succeeded in killing the rattlesnake, conceived the idea, as the only alternative, of carrying his little brother home upon his back. And this deed did the noble fellow accomplish. For two long miles did he carry his heavy burden, over rocks and down the water-courses, and in an hour after he had reached his father's cabin the younger child was dead; and the heroic boy was in a state of insensibility from the fatigue and heat which he had experienced. He recovered, however, and is now apparently in the enjoyment of good health, though when I fixed my admiring eyes upon him it seemed to me that he was far from being strong, and it was evident that a shadow rested upon his brow.

CHAPTER XX.

TRAIL MOUNTAIN.

I NOW write from near the summit of the highest mountain in Georgia. I obtained my first view of this peak while in the village of Clarksville, and it presented such a commanding appearance that I resolved to surmount it, on my way to the North, although my experience has proved that climbing high mountains is always more laborious than profitable. I came here on the back of a mule, and my guide and companion on the occasion was the principal proprietor of Nacoochee valley, Major Edward Williams. While ascending the mountain, which occupied about seven hours (from his residence), the venerable gentleman expatiated at considerable length on the superb scenery to be witnessed from its summit, and then informed me that he had just established a dairy on the mountain, which, it was easy to see, had become his hobby. He described the "ranges" of the mountains as affording an abundance of the sweetest food for cattle, and said that he had already sent to his dairy somewhere between fifty and eighty cows, and was intending soon to increase the number to one hundred. He told me that his dairyman was an excellent young man from Vermont, named Joseph E. Hubbard, to whom he was indebted for the original idea of establishing the dairy. While journeying through this region the young man chanced to stop at the major's house, and though they were perfect strangers, they conversed upon matters connected with farming, and soon became acquainted; and the stranger having made known the fact that he knew how to make butter and cheese, a bargain was struck, which has resulted in the establishment already mentioned. The Williams' dairy is

said to be the only one in the entire State of Georgia, and it is worthy of remark, that Major Williams (as well as his dairyman) is a native of New-England. He has been an exile from Yankee land for upwards of twenty years, and though nearly seventy years of age, it appears that his natural spirit of enterprise remains in full vigour.

Trail Mountain was so named by the Cherokees, from the fact that they once had a number of *trails* leading to the summit, to which point they were in the habit of ascending for the purpose of discovering the camp-fires of their enemies during the existence of hostilities. It is the king of the Blue Ridge, and reported to be five thousand feet above the waters of the surrounding country, and perhaps six thousand feet above the level of the ocean. A carpet of green grass and weeds extends to the very top, and as the trees are small, as well as "few and far between," the lover of extensive scenery has a fine opportunity of gratifying his taste. I witnessed a sunset from this great watch-tower of the South, and I know not that I was ever before more deeply impressed with the grandeur of a landscape scene. The horizon formed an unbroken circle, but I could distinctly see that in one direction alone (across South Carolina and part of Georgia) extended a comparatively level country, while the remaining three-quarters of the space around me appeared to be a wilderness of mountains. The grandest display was towards the north, and here it seemed to me that I could count at least twenty distinct ranges, fading away to the sky, until the more remote range melted into a monotonous line. No cities or towns came within the limit of my vision; no, nor even an occasional wreath of smoke, to remind me that human hearts were beating in the unnumbered valleys. A crimson hue covered the sky, but it was without a cloud to cheer the prospect, and the solemn shadow which rested upon the mountains was too deep to partake of a single hue from the departing sun. Grandeur and gloom, like twin-spirits, seemed to have subdued the world, causing the pulse of nature to cease its accustomed throb. "At one stride came the dark," and, as there was no moon, I retreated from the peak with pleasure, and sought the rude cabin, where I was to spend the night. While

doing this, the distant howl of a wolf came upon my ear, borne upward on the quiet air from one of the deep ravines leading to the base of the mountain.

As I was the guest of my friends Williams and Hubbard, I whiled away the evening in their society, asking and answering a thousand questions. Among the matters touched upon in our conversation was a certain mysterious "waterspout," of which I had heard a great deal among the people in my journeying, and which was said to have fallen upon Trail mountain. I again inquired into the particulars, and Major Williams replied as follows:—

"This waterspout story has always been a great botheration to me. The circumstance occurred several years ago. A number of hunters were spending the night in the very ravine where this shanty now stands, when, about midnight, they heard a tremendous roaring in the air, and a large torrent of water fell upon their camp, and swept it, with all its effects and its inmates, about a dozen yards from the spot where they had planted their poles. There were three hunters, and one of them was severely injured on the head by the water, and all of them completely drenched. They were, of course, much alarmed at the event, and concluded that a spring farther up the mountain had probably broken away; but when morning came they could find no evidences of a spring, and everywhere above their camping place the ground was perfectly dry, while on the lower side it was completely saturated. They were now perplexed to a marvellous degree, and returned to the lower country impressed with the idea that a waterspout had burst over their heads."

I, of course, attempted no explanation of this phenomenon, but Mr. Hubbard gave it as his opinion that if the affair actually did occur, it originated from a whirlwind, which might have taken up the water from some neighbouring river, and dashed it by the merest accident upon the poor hunters. But this reasoning seemed to me like getting "out of the frying-pan into the fire;" whereupon I concluded to "tell the tale as 'twas told to me," for the especial benefit of Professor Espy.

But to return to the dairy, which is unquestionably the chief attraction (though far from being a romantic one) connected with Trail Mountain. Heretofore, a cheese establishment has been associated in my mind with broad meadow-lands, spacious and well-furnished out-houses, and a convenient market. But here we have a dairy on the top of a mountain, distant from the first farm-house some fifteen miles, and inaccessible by any conveyance but that of a mule or well-trained horse. The bells of more than half a hundred cows are echoing along the mountain side; and instead of clover, they are feeding upon the luxuriant weed of the wilderness; instead of cool cellars, we have here a hundred tin pans arranged upon tables in a log cabin, into which a cool spring pours its refreshing treasure; instead of a tidy and matronly housewife to superintend the turning of the curd, we have an enterprising young Yankee, a veritable Green Mountain boy; and instead of pretty milkmaids, the inferiors of this establishment are huge negroes, and all of the masculine gender. And this is the establishment which supplies the people of Georgia with cheese, and the material out of which the scientific caterer manufactures the palatable Welsh Rabbit.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE SMOKY MOUNTAIN.

QUALLA TOWN, NORTH CAROLINA.

IN coming from Franklin to this place, a distance of thirty miles, I travelled over a wild, mountainous, and thinly-settled country, where I was pained to witness the evil effects of intemperance, and made happy by following the windings of a beautiful river. Having been overtaken by a thunder-storm, I found shelter in a rude and comfortless cabin, which was occupied by a man and his wife and eight children. Every member of the family was barefooted, and one or two of the children almost destitute of clothing; not one of the children, though one or two of them were full-grown girls, could read a single word; the mother was sickly and haggard in her appearance, and one of the little boys told me that he had not eaten a hearty meal for ten days. I subsequently learned that the head of this household was a miserable drunkard.

The river to which I alluded is the Tuck-a-se-ja, which falls into the Tennessee. It is a very rapid stream, and washes the base of many mountains, which are as wild as they were a century ago. Whenever there occurs any interval land, the soil is very rich, and such spots are usually occupied. The mountains are all covered with forest, where wild game is found in abundance. The fact is, the people of this whole region devote more of their time to hunting than they do to agriculture, which fact accounts for their proverbial poverty. You can hardly pass a single cabin without being howled at by half a dozen hounds; and I have now become so well educated in guessing the wealth of a mountaineer, that I know his condition by ascertaining the

number of his dogs. A rich man seldom has more than one dog, while a very poor man will keep from ten to a dozen. And this remark with regard to dogs, strange as it may seem, is equally applicable to the *children* of the mountaineers. The poorest man, without any exception, whom I have seen in this region, lives in a log-cabin, with two rooms, and is the father of *nineteen children*, and the keeper of *six hounds*.

On my arrival in this place, which is the home of a large number of Cherokee Indians (of whom I shall have much to say in future letters), I became the guest of Mr. William H. Thomas, who is the "guide, counsellor, and friend," of the Indians, as well as their business agent. While conversing with this gentleman, he excited my curiosity with regard to a certain mountain in his vicinity, and, having settled it in his own mind that I should spend a week or two with him and his Indians, proposed (first excusing himself on account of a business engagement) that I should visit the mountain in company with a gentleman in his employ as surveyor. The proposed arrangement was carried out, and thus was it that I visited *Smoky Mountain*.

This mountain is the loftiest of a large brotherhood which lie crowded together upon the dividing line between North Carolina and Tennessee. Its height cannot be less than five thousand feet above the level of the sea, for the road leading from its base to its summit is seven and a half miles long. The general character of the mountain is similar to that already given of other southern mountains, and all that I can say of its panorama is, that I can conceive nothing more grand and imposing. It gives birth to a couple of glorious streams, the *Pigeon river* of Tennessee, and the *Ocono lufty* of North Carolina, and derives its name from the circumstance that its summit is always enveloped in a blue or smoky atmosphere.

But the chief attraction of Smoky Mountain is a singular cliff known throughout this region as the *Alum Cave*. In reaching this spot, which is on the Tennessee side, you have to leave your horses on the top of the mountain, and perform a pedestrian pilgrimage of about six miles up and down, very far up and ever so far down, and over every thing in the way of rocks and ruined

vegetation which Nature could possibly devise, until you come to a mountain side, which is only two miles from your starting place at the peak. Roaring along, at the base of the mountain alluded to, is a small stream, from the margin of which you have to climb a precipice, in a zigzag way, which is at least two thousand feet high, when you find yourself on a level spot of pulverized stone, with a rocky roof extending over your head a distance of fifty or sixty feet. The length of this hollow in the mountain, or "cave," as it is called, is near four hundred feet, and from the brow of the butting precipice to the level below, the distance is perhaps one hundred and fifty feet. The top of the cliff is covered with a variety of rare and curious plants, and directly over its centre trickles a little stream of water, which forms a tiny pool, like a fountain in front of a spacious piazza. The principal ingredients of the rock composing this whitish cliff are alum, epsom-salts, saltpetre, magnesia, and copperas, and the water which oozes therefrom is distinguished for its strong medicinal qualities. This strange and almost inaccessible, but unquestionably very valuable cave, belongs to a company of neighbouring Carolinians, who have already made some money out of the alum, but have not yet accomplished much in the way of purifying and exporting the various products in which it abounds.

The scenery commanded from this cave interested me quite as much as the cave itself. From the most comprehensive point of view two mountains descend abruptly into a kind of amphitheatre, where the one on the right terminates in a very narrow and ragged ridge, which is without a particle of vegetation, while far beyond, directly in front of the cave, rises a lofty and pointed mountain, backed by three or four others of inferior magnitude. The ridge which I have mentioned is itself very high, but yet the cave looks down upon it, and it is so fantastic in its appearance that from different points of view you may discover holes leading like windows entirely through it, while from other places you might fancy that you looked upon a ruined castle, a decayed battlement, or the shattered tower of an old cathedral. To gaze upon this prospect at the sunset hour, when the mountains were

tinged with a rosy hue, and the immense hollow before me was filled with a purple atmosphere, and I could see the rocky ledge basking in the sunlight like a huge monster on the placid bosom of a lake, was to me one of the most remarkable and impressive scenes that I ever witnessed, and then remember, too, that I looked upon this wonderful prospect from a frame-work of solid rock, composed of the stooping cliff. It was a glorious picture, indeed, and would have amply repaid one for a pilgrimage from the remotest corner of the earth.

The ordinary time required to visit the Alum Cave is two days; but, owing to bad weather, my friend and myself occupied the greater part of four days in performing the same trip. To give a minute account of all that we met with would occupy too much time, and I will therefore only record in this place the incidents which made the deepest impression on my own mind.

Our first night from home we spent in the cabin of a man who treated us with the utmost kindness, and would not receive a penny for his pains. So much for mountain hospitality. And now, to prove that our friend was an intelligent man, it may be mentioned that he is an adept in the following professions and trades, viz., those of medicine, the law, the blacksmith, the carpenter, the hunter, the shoemaker, the watchmaker, the farmer, and he also seemed to possess an inkling of some half dozen sciences. Now, I do not exactly mean to assert that the gentleman is a master practitioner in all these departments of human learning and industry, but if you were to judge of his ability by his use of technical words, you would not for a moment imagine he could have a competitor. But so it is in this wild region, one man has to perform the intellectual labour of a whole district, and, wh[illegible] really a hard case, the knowledge which is thus brought t[illegible]ood a market is nearly always the fruit of a chance educa-[illegible] and not of a systematic one.

[illegible]mong those who spent the night with us under the roof of [illegible] above accomplished man, was one of the idle vagabonds of [illegible] country. This individual, it appears, had met with a singular [illegible]ident on the day previous, and amused us by relating it. I

regret that I cannot remember all the singular epithets that he employed, but I will do my best to report him faithfully.

"Now, the way the thing happened was this, and I reckon you never heard sich like afore. A lot of us fellers was out in 'Squire Jones's millpond a washing ourselves and swimming. Now, I allow this pond, in a common way, is nigh on to half a mile long; but at this time they were draining the pond, and it warnt so very large. Wall, there was one spot, well nigh the middle—no, not exactly, I reckon it was a little to the left—where the water poured out into a rale catarock. The fellers I was with got the devil in 'em, and offered to bet the tobaccer that I couldn't swim near the big hole in the dam without going through. I agreed, for I always counted myself a powerful swimmer. I made one try, and just touched the outside of the whirlpool. The fellers laughed at me, and said I couldn't come it. I knew they said what was not so, and I got mad. I tried it again, and went a bit nearer, when they yelled out again, and said it was no go. By this time I was considerable perplexed, but I swore to myself I would have the tobaccer, and I made one more try. But this time I got into the whirlpool, and couldn't get out; and, in less than no time, the water wheeled my head round to the hole, and in I went quick as a streak. I went through the hole, 'bout four or six feet long—no, I allow 'twas seven feet—and fell into the surge below, and, in five minutes or so—perhaps six—I was on dry land, sound as a button. The joke was on the fellers then, and when I told 'em to hand over my plunder, they said they would, and told me I looked like a big frog when I come out of the hole into the pool below the dam."

On the following morning we travelled to the foot of Smoky Mountain, and having obtained a guide, who happened to be one of the proprietors of Alum Cave, we resumed our journey. In the immediate vicinity of the cave we came across an Indian camp, where were two Indians who were out bear-hunting. We were admitted under their bark roof, and spent the night with them, sleeping upon the ground. We remained a sufficient length of time to enjoy one supper and one breakfast; the first

was composed of corn bread and bear meat, and the second of trout (caught in a neighbouring stream) and a corn cake fried in the fat of a bear.

On questioning our Indian landlords, as we sat around our watch-fire, with regard to the Alum Cave, I could only gather the fact that it was originally discovered by the famous chief Yo-na-gus-ka, who happened in his youth to track a bear to one of its corners, where he had a den. Disappointed on this score, I then turned to our guide to see what he could tell me about the cave that was not connected with its minerals, and the substance of his narrative was as follows:—

"I hav'n't much to say about the cave that I knows of, excepting one or two little circumstances about myself and another man. The first time I come here it was with my brother and two Indians. The sight of this strange gash in the mountain and the beautiful scenery all around made me very excited, and I was for climbing on top, and no mistake The Indians and my brother started with me up the ledge at the north end of the cave, but when we got up about half way, just opposite to an eagle's nest, where the creatures were screaming at a fearful rate, they all three of 'em backed down, and said I must not keep on. I told 'em I was determined to see the top, and I would. I did get on top, and, after looking round awhile and laughing at the fellows below, I began to think of going down again. And then it was that I felt a good deal skeered. I found I couldn't get down the way I got up, so I turned about for a new place. It was now near sundown, and I hadn't yet found a place that suited me, and I was afraid I'd have to sleep out alone and without any fire. And the only way I ever got down was to find a pine tree that stood pretty close to a low part of the ledge, some three hundred yards from the cave, when I got into its top, and so came down among my friends, who said it was a wonder I hadn't been killed.

"I generally have had to pilot all strangers to the cave since that time, and I remember one circumstance that happened to a Tennessee lawyer, who caused us a good deal of fun; for there was a party of young gentlemen there at the time. We had a

camp right under the cave, where it's always dry, and about midnight the lawyer I mentioned suddenly jumped up as we were all asleep, and began to yell in the most awful manner, as if something dreadful had happened. He jumped about as if in the greatest agony, and called on God to have mercy on him, for he knew he would die. O, he did carry on at a most awful rate, and we thought he must have been bitten by some snake or was crazy, so we tore off his clothes to see what was the matter; and what do you suppose we found? Nothing but a harmless little lizard, that had run up the poor man's legs, all the way up to his arm-pits, thinking, I suppose, that his clothes was the bark of a dead tree. After the trouble was all over, the way we laughed at the fellow was curious."

Our second day at the Alum Cave (and third one from home), was a remarkably cheerless one; for a regular snow-storm set in, mingled with hail, and, before we could reach our horses and descend the Smoky Mountain, some three or four inches of snow had fallen. We spent that night under the roof of our good friend and worthy man, the guide, and it was with difficulty that we could induce him to receive a quarter eagle for all his trouble in piloting us and treating us to his best fare. On that night we ate our supper at nine o'clock, and what rendered it somewhat peculiar was the fact that his two eldest daughters, and very pretty girls they were, waited upon us at table, holding above our heads a couple of torches made of the fat pine. That was the first time that I was ever waited upon in so regal a style, and more than once during the feast did I long to retire in a corner of the smoky and dingy cabin to take a sketch of the romantic scene. At sunrise on the following morning my companion and myself remounted our horses, and in three hours were eating our breakfast in Qualla Town.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE CHEROKEES OF CAROLINA.

QUALLA TOWN, NORTH CAROLINA.

QUALLA TOWN is a name applied to a tract of seventy-two thousand acres of land, in Haywood county, which is occupied by about eight hundred Cherokee Indians and one hundred Catawbas. Their district is mountainous from one extremity to the other, and watered by a number of beautiful streams, which abound in fish; the valleys and slopes are quite fertile, and the lower mountains are well adapted to grazing, and at the same time are heavily timbered and supplied with every variety of game. This portion of a much larger multitude of aborigines, in consideration of their rank and age, and of valuable services rendered to the United States, were permitted by the general government to remain upon their native soil, while the great body of the Cherokee nation were driven into exile. They (the exiles) amounted in all to more than sixteen thousand souls, *eighteen hundred and fifty* having died on their way to the "*promised land*" beyond the Mississippi. And here it may with propriety be added, that since the removal those in the West have gradually decreased in number, while the remaining portion have steadily increased, by births at the rate of four per cent. per annum. In addition to the Indians above mentioned, it ought to be stated that there is a remnant of two hundred still remaining in the county of Cherokee; of those, however, I know but little, and therefore purpose to confine my remarks to those of Qualla Town alone.

The Indians of this district, having formed themselves into a regular company, with appropriate regulations, they elected an

old friend of theirs, named William H. Thomas, (mentioned in my last letter,) to become their business chief, so that the connection now existing between the two parties is that of father and children. What the result of this arrangement has been will be fully understood when I come to speak of the advance which the Indians have made in the march of civilization. As they are organized at the present time, the Qualla Town people are divided into seven clans, and to each clan is assigned what is called a town, over each of which presides a regular chief. The Cherokee nation was originally divided into seven clans, which were probably descended from certain noted families, and the old party feeling is still preserved with jealous care among their descendants in this vicinity. The names of the clans are: In-e-chees-quah, or Bird Clan; In-egil-lohee, or Pretty-faced Clan; In e-wo-tah, or Paint Clan; In-e-wah-he-yah, or Wolf Clan; In-e se-ho-nih, or Blue Clan; In-e-co-wih, or Deer Clan; and In-e-eo-te-ca-wih, the meaning of which is not known. And among the customs which prevail among these clans is one which prevents their marrying among themselves, so that they have to select their wives from a neighbouring fraternity. Formerly such marriages were prohibited by penalty of death.

With regard to the extent of their civilization and their existing manner of life, the following may be looked upon as a comprehensive summary: About three-fourths of the entire population can read in their own language, and, though the majority of them understand English, very few can speak the language. They practise, to a considerable extent, the science of agriculture, and have acquired such a knowledge of the mechanical arts as answers them for all ordinary purposes, for they manufacture their own clothing, their own ploughs, and other farming utensils, their own axes, and even their own guns. Their women are no longer treated as slaves, but as equals; the men labour in the fields, and their wives are devoted entirely to household employments. They keep the same domestic animals that are kept by their white neighbours, and cultivate all the common grain of the country. They are probably as temperate as any other class of people on the face of the earth, honest in

their business intercourse, moral in their thoughts, words, and deeds, and distinguished for their faithfulness in performing the duties of religion. They are chiefly Methodists and Baptists, and have regularly ordained ministers, who preach to them on every Sabbath, and they have also abandoned many of their mere senseless superstitions. They have their own courts, and try their criminals by a regular jury. Their judges and lawyers are chosen from among themselves. They keep in order the public roads leading through their settlement. By a law of the State they have the right to vote, but seldom exercise that right, as they do not like the idea of being identified with any of the political parties. Excepting on festive days, they dress after the manner of the white man, but far more picturesquely. They live in small log houses of their own construction, and have every thing they need or desire in the way of food. They are, in fact, the happiest community that I have yet met with in this Southern country, and no candid man can visit them without being convinced of the wickedness and foolishness of that policy of the government which has always acted upon the opinion that the red man could not be educated into a reasonable being.

By way of giving my readers a correct idea of the present condition of the Carolina Cherokees, I will describe a visit that I paid to one of their churches on the Sabbath. I was anxious to see how far they were advanced in the ways of Christian instruction, and, though I noticed many little eccentricities, I was, upon the whole, very much pleased with what I saw and heard. I was accompanied by Mr. Thomas, and we reached the rude but spacious log meeting-house about eleven o'clock. The first hour was devoted to instr cting the children from a Cherokee Catechism, and the chiefs of the several clans were the officiating teachers. At twelve o'clock a congregaton of some one hundred and fifty souls was collected, a large proportion of whom were women, who were as neatly dressed as could be desired, with tidy calico gowns, and fancy handkerchiefs tied over their heads. The deportment of all present was as circumspect and solemn as I have ever witnessed in any New England religious assembly. When a prayer was offered they

all fell upon their knees, and in singing all but the concluding hymn they retained their seats. Their form of worship was according to the Methodist custom, but in their singing there was a wild and plaintive sweetness which was very impressive. The women and children as well as the men participated in this portion of the ceremony, and some of the female voices reminded me of the warbling of birds. They sung four hymns; three prayers were offered by several individuals, and two sermons or exhortations were delivered. The prayers were short and pointed, and, as the shortest may be considered a fair specimen of the others, I will transcribe it for the edification of my readers:

"Almighty Lord, who art the father of the world, look down from heaven on this congregation. Bless the Indians, and supply them with all the food and clothing they may want; bless, also, the white men, and give them every thing they may need. Aid us all, O Lord, in all our good works. Take care of us through life, and receive us in heaven when the world shall be burnt up. We pray thee to take care of this young white man who has come to this Indian meeting. Protect him in all his travels, and go with him to his distant home, for we know by his kind words that he is a friend of the poor ignorant and persecuted Indian. Amen!"

The first preacher who addressed the meeting was a venerable man, *Big Charley*, and he took for his text the entire first chapter of John; but, before proceeding with his remarks, he turned to Mr. Thomas, and wished to know if he should preach with the "*linguister*," or interpreter, for the benefit of the young stranger. I told him no; but requested Mr. Thomas to take notes, and, through his kindness, it is now my privilege to print the substance of that Cherokee sermon. It was as follows:—

"In the beginning of creation, the world was covered with water. God spake the word and the dry land was made. He next made the day and the night; also, the sun, moon, and stars. He then made all the beasts and birds and fishes in the world, and was much pleased. He wanted some one to take care of all these creatures, and so he made man, and from his body a woman, to help him and be his companion. He put them into a beautiful

garden, which was filled with all kinds of good things to eat, but told them that there was one fruit they must not touch. That fruit was an apple, I believe. The woman was not grateful to God, and when a wicked serpent told her she might eat of the beautiful fruit which she was so curious to taste, she did eat of it, and gave some to the man, and he took some too. God talked with the man about his wicked conduct, and told him that he and his children should always have to work very hard for all they had to eat, so long as they lived in the world; and to the woman, God said, she must always suffer very much when she had children, and that the man should be her master. The man and woman were then turned out of the beautiful garden, and they were the father and mother of all the Indians in the world, as well as the white men and the black men. They had a great many children, and the world was very full of people. The people were very wicked, and God warned a good man that he intended to destroy the world by covering it all with water, and that this good man must build a large boat like a house, and get into it with his family, that they might not perish. The people laughed at this good man for believing such a story; but he took into his house two kinds of all the animals in the world, and the waters came; so the world was destroyed. After many days the good man sent out a dove to find some land, but it could not find any and came back. He sent it out again, and it never returned, and soon the great house rested on the top of a high mountain. Another race of people then covered the earth; and a great many good men lived upon the earth. One of the greatest of them it was who received from God the *ten commandments*, which direct all men how to be good and happy; but the world was yet very wicked. Long after this, God sent into the world his only Son, whose name was Jesus Christ. This wonderful being it was who gave up his own life that all the wicked of the world might be saved, and the justice of God be satisfied; and so it is, that all the Indians, as well as the white men, who live like Jesus Christ, can get to heaven when they die."

In delivering his sermon the preacher occupied about thirty minutes; and the above facts were cemented together by a great

number of flowery expressions, which made it quite poetical. His manner was impressive, but not particularly eloquent. After he had taken his seat, and a hymn had been sung, a young man stepped into the rude pulpit, who has distinguished himself by his eloquence. His name is Tekin-neb, or the Garden of Eden. He spoke from the same text, and his remarks bore chiefly on the redemption by Christ. At the conclusion of his address he gave a sketch of his own religious experience, and concluded by a remarkably affecting appeal to his hearers. His voice, emphasis, and manner, were those of a genuine orator, and his thoughts were poetical to an uncommon degree. In dwelling upon the marvellous love of the Saviour, and the great wickedness of the world, he was affected to tears, and when he concluded there was hardly a dry eye in the house.

After the benediction had been pronounced, Mr. Thomas delivered a short address to the meeting on temperance and a few secular matters, when the Indians quietly dispersed to their several homes. I retired to my own temporary home, deeply impressed by what I had seen and heard, for my pride had been humbled while listening to the rude savage, whose religious knowledge was evidently superior to my own.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CHEROKEE CUSTOMS.

QUALLA TOWN, NORTH CAROLINA.

THE plan adopted for the civilization of the Carolina Cherokees differs materially from any others adopted in the United States. Their amusements are not interfered with, excepting when found to have an immoral or unhappy tendency. A goodly number of their more ridiculous games, however, they have abandoned of their own accord, but the manly game of *ball-playing* is still practised after the ancient manner, with one or two restrictions. In the first place, they are not allowed to wager their property on the games, as of old, unless it be some trifle in the way of a woollen belt or cotton handkerchief, and they are prohibited from choking each other, and breaking their heads and legs, when excited, as was their habit in former times. Since my arrival here the Indians have had one of their ball games, and as it was got up especially for my edification, I made it a point of etiquette to be present at the preparatory dance and the game, as well as at the concluding ceremony, and these I will now endeavour to describe.

The preparatory, or training dance, took place on the night preceding the game, and none participated in it who were not to play on the following day. There were sixty young men present, besides the spectators, and they met on a grassy plot formed by a bend of a neighbouring stream called Soco Creek. The dancers were stripped of every particle of clothing but their waistbands; they made their own music, which was composed merely of a rapid succession of whoops and shouts; and they danced round a large blazing fire. The night in question was very beautiful, and when this strange group was looked upon by

the light of the full moon, with the wild mountain scenery on every side, they presented a most romantic appearance. They kept up the dance above an hour, and, when it was concluded, all the men immediately ran towards a deep pool in the ice-cold stream, and without waiting for the perspiration to cool, plunged into the water, and, having finally emerged, started for their several homes. This dance, I am informed, had its origin in an ancient custom, which compelled all the candidates for a game of ball to inure themselves to every hardship for ten days before the game took place, and during all that time they were to eat but little food, and were to refrain from gratifying any of their sensual appetites.

On the morning of the game a large plain, lying between two hills and directly in front of the Indian Court-house (a large circular lodge, built of logs,) was divested of every stone and stick on its surface, and at ten o'clock the spectators began to assemble. These were composed of the old men of the nation, a large number of boys, and a still larger number of women and children. They were all dressed in their holiday attire, so that feathers, shawl-turbans, scarlet belts, and gaudy hunting-shirts, were quite abundant; and, scattered as they were in groups of from five to fifty on the hill-sides and under the shadow of the trees, they presented a most picturesque appearance. During all this time the players kept out of sight, and it was understood that the two parties were among the bushes, at the two ends of the plain, preparing themselves for the game. Under the direction of the presiding chief, or game-director, two poles were now erected about six hundred yards apart, on either side of a given centre, and in this centre was placed the ball. From this point it was to be given to the players, and the party which first succeeded in throwing it twelve times outside the pole belonging to their opponents were to be considered the winners.

Every thing being ready, a shrill whoop was given from one end of the plain, and immediately answered by the opposing party, when they all made their appearance, marching slowly to the centre, shouting and yelling as they passed along. Each

party consisted of thirty splendidly-formed young men, who were unincumbered by any clothing, save their common waistband, and every individual carried in his hand a pair of ball sticks, made with a braided bag at one end. As the parties approached the centre, the lady-loves of the players ran out upon the plain and gave their favourite champions a variety of articles, such as belts and handkerchiefs, which they were willing to wager upon the valour of their future husbands. This little movement struck me as particularly interesting, and I was greatly pleased with the bashfulness and yet complete confidence with which the Indian maidens manifested their preferences.

When the several parties were assembled at the centre of the plain, each man selected his particular antagonist by placing his sticks at his rival's feet, after which the game-director delivered a long speech, wherein he warned them to adhere to the existing regulations; and, throwing the ball high up in the air, made his escape to one side of the plain, and the game commenced. As it proceeded, the players became greatly excited, and I noticed that the ball was never taken in hand until after it had been picked up by the *spoony* stick, but the expertness with which those movements were performed was indeed surprising. At one time the whole crowd of players would rush together in the most desperate and fearful manner, presenting, as they struggled for the ball, the appearance of a dozen gladiators, striving to overcome a monster serpent; and then again, as one man would secure the ball and start for the boundary line of his opponent, the races which ensued were very beautiful and exciting. Wrestling conflicts also occurred quite frequently, and it often seemed as if the players would break every bone in their bodies as they threw each other in the air, or dragged each other over the ground; and many of the leaps, which single individuals performed, were really superb. The exercise was of a character that would kill the majority of white men. The game lasted for about two hours, and the moment it was finished the entire body of players, while yet panting with excessive fatigue, made a rush for the neighbouring river, and in a short

time appeared on the plain in their usual garb, and the old chief who had held the stakes awarded the prizes to the winning party. A short time afterwards the boys stripped themselves, and went through the same routine of playing as already described, when the ball-playing was at an end, and the people began to disperse with a view of getting ready for the evening dance.

I employed the intervening time by going home with one of the chiefs, and eating a comfortable supper in his log cabin. The habitation of this chief was made of hewn logs, and occupied a farm of twenty acres on the mountain side, about one-fourth of which was in a state of cultivation, and planted with corn and potatoes. He had a tidy wife and several children, and his stock consisted of a pony, a cow, and some ten or a dozen sheep. At nine o'clock, I was again in the midst of a crowd of Indians, assembled at the court-house of the town. The edifice, so called, is built of hewn logs, very large and circular, without any floor but that of solid earth, and without any seats but one short bench intended for the great men of the nation. In the centre of this lodge was a large fire, and the number of persons who figured in the several dances of the evening was perhaps two hundred, all fantastically dressed, and including men, women, and boys. Each dancer made his own music, and, with one exception, the dances were of the common Indian sort. The exception alluded to was particularly fantastic, and called "The Pilgrim Dance." They came in with packs on their backs, with their faces strangely painted, and with gourds hanging at their sides, and the idea seemed to be to represent their hospitality towards all strangers who visited them from distant lands. The dancing continued until midnight, when the presiding chief addressed the multitude on the subject of their duties as intelligent beings, and told them to return to their several homes and resume their labours in the field and in the shops. He concluded by remarking that he hoped I was pleased with what I had witnessed, and trusted that nothing had happened which would make the wise men of my country in the East think less of the poor Indian than they did at the present time; and he then

added that, according to an ancient custom, as I was a stranger they liked, the several chiefs had given me a name, by which I should hereafter be remembered among the Carolina Cherokees, and that name was *Ga-taw-hough No-que-sih*, or *The Wandering Star.*

CHAPTER XXIV.

HICKORY NUT GAP.

ASHVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA.

THE distance from Qualla Town to this place is sixty miles. The first half of the route is exceedingly mountainous and almost entirely uncultivated; but the valley of Pigeon River, down which you have to travel for a considerable distance, is very fertile and well-cultivated. A pastoral charm seems to rest upon the scenery, and in this particular forcibly reminded me of the upper valley of the Mohawk. I occupied nearly two days in performing this trip, and the only incident that I met with which was at all unique, was upon this wise. I had stopped at a farm house to take my dinner. It so happened that my host was about to erect a new barn, and some twenty of his neighbours were assembled for the purpose of raising the framework to its proper position. An abundance of whisky had already been imbibed by a few of this rustic company, and among these was one individual who had recently been grossly cheated in purchasing a horse from a Tennessee horse-dealer. He had given a mule and twenty dollars for the stranger's gelding; and, though the animal was quite respectable in appearance, it had turned out to be old, unsound, and almost without a redeeming quality. The individual in question was noted for making a fool of himself when intoxicated, and on this occasion he was determined to prove true to himself. At this time his horse speculation seemed to weigh heavily upon his mind, and in his vehement remarks he took particular pains to curse the entire State of Tennessee, including President Polk. The poor man finally became so completely excited that he swore he would whip the first man he

met on the road who happened to be from Tennessee; and so the matter rested. In about thirty minutes thereafter, as fortune would have it, a man made his appearance on the road, apparently from the West, and, in jeering their noisy companion, the farmers remarked that "now he would have a chance to revenge himself." The excitement of the horse-bitten speculator was consequently greatly increased, and when the stranger reached the hill-top he was accosted as follows:—

"May I ask you, sir, if you come from Tennessee?"

"I do. What will you have?" replied the stranger.

The Carolinian then related his trading story, which he concluded by carefully reiterating the determination he had made. The stranger laughed at the idea, and was about to resume his journey, when the reins of his horse were seized, and he found that it was indeed necessary for him to fight his way out of the queer scrape. All remonstrance on his part was in vain; but at the very moment the fight was to commence, another horseman rode up, who was also interrogated as to his native State. His presence had a tendency to suspend hostilities, but when it was ascertained that he was *only* a Kentuckian, the Carolinian insisted upon going on with his business. The feelings of the Kentuckian were now enlisted, and he declared his intention of regulating the fight; whereupon he made a large ring, and taking out of his pocket a couple of pistols, he told the combatants "to go ahead," and at the same time warned the bystanders that he would shoot the first man that interfered. The conclusion of the whole matter was, that the intoxicated man received a cruel thrashing for his ridiculous conduct, and the two gentlemen from the West quietly resumed their several journeys.

On my way to this place, I stopped for a few hours at *Deaver's Sulphur Springs,* which are about four miles from the French Broad River, on the road to Clarksville, Georgia. This is one of the most popular watering-places in the South, not only on account of the medicinal qualities of the water, and of the surrounding scenery, which is remarkably interesting, but also for the additional reason that the style in which people are entertained is well worthy of even such places as Saratoga. The several buildings

connected with the establishment usually accommodate about two hundred families during the summer months, and they are chiefly from the cities of Charleston and Savannah. The people of Eastern North Carolina do not seem to know that they have such a delightful retreat within their borders, which, to a man of genuine taste, is as far ahead of Saratoga as a mountain stream is superior to a canal.

With regard to Ashville, I can only say that it is a very busy and pleasant village, filled with intelligent and hospitable inhabitants, and is the centre of a mountain land, where Nature has been extremely liberal and tasteful in piling up her mighty bulwarks for the admiration of man. Indeed, from the summit of a hill immediately in the vicinity of the village, I had a southwestern view which struck me as eminently superb. It was near the sunset hour, and the sky was flooded with a golden glow, which gave a living beauty to at least a hundred mountain peaks, from the centre of which loomed high towards the zenith *Mount Pisgah* and the *Cold Mountain*, richly clothed in purple, which are from twenty to thirty miles distant, and not far from six thousand feet in height. The middle distance, though in reality composed of wood-crowned hills, presented the appearance of a level plain or valley, where columns of blue smoke were gracefully floating into the upper air, and whence came the occasional tinkle of a bell, as the cattle wended their way homeward, after roaming among the unfenced hills. Directly at my feet lay the little town of Ashville, like an oddly-shaped figure on a green carpet; and over the whole scene dwelt a spirit of repose, which seemed to quiet even the common throbbings of the heart.

My first expedition on arriving here was to a gorge in the Blue Ridge called the *Hickory Nut Gap*. How it came by that name I cannot imagine, since the forests in this particular region, so far as I could ascertain, are almost entirely destitute of the hickory tree. It is true that for a distance of four miles the gorge is watered by a brook called after the hickory nut, but I take it that this name is a borrowed one. The entire length of the gap is about nine miles, and the last five miles are watered by the Rocky Broad River. The upper part of this stream runs

between the Blue Ridge proper and a spur of the Blue Ridge, and at the point where it forces a channel through the spur its bed is exceedingly rocky, and on either hand, until it reaches the middle country of the State, it is protected by a series of mountain bluffs. That portion of the gorge which might be called the gateway is at the eastern extremity. From any point of view this particular spot is remarkably imposing, the gap being not more than half a mile wide, though appearing to narrow down to a few hundred yards. The highest bluff is on the south side, and, though rising to the height of full *twenty five hundred feet*, it is nearly perpendicular; and midway up its front stands an isolated rock, looming against the sky, which is of a circular form, and resembles the principal turret of a stupendous castle. The entire mountain is composed of granite, and a large proportion of the bluff in question positively hangs over the abyss beneath, and is as smooth as it could possibly be made by the rains of uncounted centuries. Over one portion of this superb cliff, falling far down into some undiscovered and apparently unattainable pool, is a stream of water, which seems to be the offspring of the clouds; and in a neighbouring brook near the base of this precipice are three waterfalls, at the foot of which, formed out of the solid stone, are three holes, which are about ten feet in diameter, and measure from forty to fifty feet in depth. But, leaving these remarkable features entirely out of the question, the mountain scenery in this vicinity is as beautiful and fantastic as any I have yet witnessed among the Alleghanies. At a farm-house near the gap, where I spent a night, I had the pleasure of meeting an English gentleman and tourist, and he informed me that, though he had crossed the Alps in a number of places, yet he had never seen any mountain scenery which he thought as beautiful as that of the Hickory Nut Gap. My best view of the gorge was from the eastward, and just as the sun, with a magnificent retinue of clouds, was sinking directly in the hollow of the hills, and as I gazed upon the prospect, it seemed to me, as was in reality the case, that I stood at the very threshold of an almost boundless wilderness of mountains.

Before visiting this remarkable passage through the mountains,

I endeavoured to ascertain, from the Cherokees of Qualla Town, its original Indian name, but without succeeding. It was my good fortune, however, to obtain a romantic legend connected therewith. I heard it from the lips of a chief who glories in the two names of *All Bones* and *Flying Squirrel*, and, though he occupied no less than two hours in telling the story, I will endeavour to give it to my readers in about five minutes.

There was a time when the Cherokees were without the famous *Tso-lungh*, or tobacco-weed, with which they had previously been made acquainted by a wandering stranger from the far East. Having smoked it in their large stone pipes, they became impatient to obtain it in abundance. They ascertained that the country where it grew in the greatest quantities was situated on the big waters, and that the gateway to that country (a mighty gorge among the mountains) was perpetually guarded by an immense number of little people or spirits. A council of the bravest men in the nation was called, and while they were discussing the dangers of visiting the unknown country, and bringing therefrom a large knapsack of the fragrant tobacco, a young man stepped boldly forward, and said that he would undertake the task. The young warrior departed on his mission and never returned. The Cherokee nation were now in great tribulation, and another council was held to decide upon a new measure. At this council a celebrated magician rose, and expressed his willingness to relieve his people of their difficulties, and informed them that he would visit the tobacco country and see what he could accomplish. He turned himself into a mole, and, as such, made his appearance eastward of the mountains; but, having been pursued by the guardian spirits, he was compelled to return without any spoil. He next turned himself into a humming-bird, and thus succeeded, to a very limited extent, in obtaining what he needed. On returning to his country, he found a number of his friends at the point of death, on account of their intense desire for the fragrant weed; whereupon he placed some of it in a pipe, and, having blown the smoke into the nostrils of those who were sick, they all revived and were quite happy. The magician now took it into his head that he would revenge the loss of the

young warrior, and at the same time become the sole possessor of all the tobacco in the unknown land. He therefore turned himself into a whirlwind, and in passing through the Hickory Nut Gorge he stripped the mountains of their vegetation, and scattered huge rocks in every part of the narrow valley, whereupon the little people were all frightened away, and he was the only being in the country eastward of the mountains. In the bed of a stream he found the bones of the young warrior, and having brought them to life, and turned himself into a man again, the twain returned to their own country, heavily laden with tobacco; and ever since that time it has been very abundant throughout the entire land.

CHAPTER XXV.

DOWN THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER.

ASHVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA.

I HAVE just returned from an excursion down the French Broad River to *Patton's Warm Springs*, and the neighbouring curiosities, and I now purpose to describe the "wonders I have seen." The original Indian name of the French Broad was *Pse-li-co*, the meaning of which I have not been able to ascertain. Its English name was derived from a famous hunter named *French*. It is one of the principal tributaries of the Tennessee, about one hundred miles long, from one to two hundred yards wide, and taking its rise in the Blue Ridge near the border of South Carolina, runs in a northwestern direction. Judging of the whole, by a section of fifty miles lying westward of Ashville, it must be considered one of the most beautiful rivers in this beautiful land. In running the distance above-mentioned it has a fall of nearly fifteen hundred feet, and its bed seems to be entirely composed of solid rock. In depth it varies from five to fifteen feet, and, generally speaking, it is quite clear, abounding in a great variety of plebeian fish. Its shores are particularly wild and rocky, for the most part nearly perpendicular, varying from one to four hundred feet in height, and, though usually covered with vegetation, they present frequent cliffs of granite, freestone, and blue limestone, which actually droop over the rushing waters, and present a most imposing appearance. With regard to its botanical curiosities, it can safely be said that a more fruitful and interesting valley can nowhere be found in the Union. Here we have not only every variety of American forest trees, but bushes, plants,

flowers, and vines, in the greatest profusion, and of the most vigorous growth; many of the grape vines, which weigh down the mighty sycamore, seem to be long enough, and strong enough, to link together a hundred ships of war. When it is remembered, too, that the air is constantly heavy with the fragrance of flowers, and tremulous with the perpetual roar of the stream, it may be readily imagined that a ride down the French Broad is a unique pleasure. Back of the river on either side the country is hilly and somewhat cultivated, but its immediate valley contains nothing that smacks of civilization but a turnpike road, and an occasional tavern. This road runs directly along the water's edge nearly the entire distance, and, on account of the quantity of traffic which passes over it, is kept in admirable repair. It is the principal thoroughfare between Tennessee and South Carolina, and an immense number of cattle, horses, and hogs, are annually driven over it to the seaboard markets. Over this road, also, a large amount of merchandise is constantly transported for the merchants of the interior, so that mammoth waggons, with their eight and ten horses, and their half-civilized teamsters, are as plenty as blackberries, and afford a romantic variety to the stranger.

In riding down the French Broad, I overtook a gentleman on horseback, who accompanied me about twenty miles. Immediately after the first salutation was passed, and he had ascertained that I was from the eastward, he questioned me with regard to *the latest news from China.* I was surprised at the question, and after telling him I had none to communicate, I could not refrain from asking him what was the secret of his interest in that remote Empire. He replied that he resided on the French Broad, and was a dealer in ginseng. I had heard of the article before, and knew that it was found in abundance throughout this mountain region. My friend described it as a beautiful plant, with one stem and some twenty leaves at the top, and growing to the height of eighteen inches. That portion of it, however, which is prepared for market is the root. The Chinese are the only people in the world who make any use of it whatever; but with them it has been an article of commerce from time

immemorial. It is said to be associated in some way or other with an unexplained superstition. Formerly it was obtained exclusively from Tartary, and the Tartars were in the habit of saying that they could never find it, excepting by shooting a mag c arrow, which invariably fell where the plant was abundant. In Pekin an ounce of ginseng is said to be worth seven or eight ounces of silver; and the Chinese have written many volumes upon its virtues. Among the names which they apply to it are these—" The pure spirit of the earth," and "the plant that gives immortality." It is not thought in this country to possess any valuable medicinal quality, and only has the effect of strengthening the sensual appetite. It is used in the same manner that we use tobacco, and to the tongue it is an agreeable bitter. It has been an article of export from this country for half a century, and the most extensive American shippers at the present time reside in Philadelphia. It is sold for about sixty cents the pound, and my travelling companion told me that his sales amounted to about forty thousand dollars per annum. What an idea! that even the celestials are dependent upon the United States for one of their cherished luxuries, and that luxury a common unnoticed plant of the wilderness! Ours is, indeed, "a great country."

I come now to speak of the Warm Springs, which are thirty-six miles from Ashville, and within six of the Tennessee line. Of the Springs themselves there are some half dozen, but the largest is covered by a house, and divided into two equal apartments, either one of which is sufficiently large to allow swimming. The temperature of the water is 105 degrees, and it is a singular fact that rainy weather has a tendency to increase the heat, but it never varies more than a couple of degrees. All the springs are directly on the southern margin of the French Broad; the water is clear as crystal, and so heavy that even a child may be thrown into it with little danger of being drowned. As a beverage the water is quite palatable, and it is said that some people can drink a number of quarts per day, and yet experience only beneficial effects. The diseases which it is thought to cure are palsy, rheumatism, and cutaneous affections;

but they are of no avail in curing pulmonic or dropsical affections. The Warm Springs are annually visited by a large number of fashionable and sickly people from all the Southern States, and the proprietor has comfortable accommodations for two hundred and fifty people. His principal building is of brick, and the ball-room is 230 feet long. Music, dancing, flirting, wine-drinking, riding, bathing, fishing, scenery-hunting, bowling, and reading, are all practised here to an unlimited extent; but, what is more exciting than all these pleasures put together, is the rare sport of deer-hunting; and hereby "hangs a tale" to which I must devote a separate paragraph.

My polite landlord had intimated his intention of affording me a little sport, and immediately after a twelve o'clock dinner, on a certain day, he stepped out upon his piazza and gave two or three blasts with a small horn, the result of which was, that, in about fifteen minutes, a negro mounted on a handsome horse made his appearance, accompanied by some twenty yelping hounds. The horn was next handed to the negro, and he was requested to go to a certain spot on the mountains about three miles off, and put the dogs out after a deer. Two hours having elapsed, the landlord, his son, and myself, each took a rifle, and after riding some three miles up the French Broad, we stationed ourselves at different points for the purpose of welcoming the deer, which was expected to take to the water on the opposite side. We had scarcely been ten minutes in our hiding-places before the loud baying of the hounds was heard, as they were coming down one of the mountain ravines, and in another instant a very large buck (with his horns as yet only about a foot long) plunged into the rapid stream. Instead of crossing the water, however, he made his way directly down the river, now swimming and now leaping, with the entire pack of hounds directly in his foamy wake. It was evident that he considered himself hard pressed, and, though now approaching a very rocky fall in the stream, he gave himself to the current and went over, and it seemed as if he must inevitably perish. But another call was immediately made upon our sympathies, for we discovered the entire pack of hounds passing into the same hell of waters. We

remained in suspense, however, but a few moments, for we saw the pursued and the pursuers all emerge from the foam entirely unharmed, and still struggling in the race. Now the deer took to an island, and then to another, and now again to the water, and away did the whole pack speed down the river. By this time the buck was evidently becoming tired, and certain of being overtaken; and having reached a shallow place in the river, he turned upon the dogs and stood at bay. His movements during this scene were indeed superb, and I could not but pity the noble fellow's condition. His sufferings, however, were of short duration, for, while thus standing in full front of his enemies, the landlord's son sent a ball through his heart from the shore, and with one frightful leap the monarch of the mountains was floating in a crimson pool. The mounted negro now made his appearance, as if by magic, and, having waded and swam his horse to the dead deer, took the creature in tow, brought him to the land, threw him upon his horse, and so ended the afternoon deer-hunt.

About six miles from the Warm Springs, and directly on the Tennessee line, are located a brotherhood of perpendicular cliffs, which are known as the *Painted Rocks*. They are of limestone, and rise from the margin of the French Broad to the height of two, three, and four hundred feet. They are of a yellowish cast, owing to the drippings of a mineral water, and in form are as irregular and fantastic as can well be imagined. They extend along the river nearly a mile, and at every step present new phases of beauty and grandeur. Considered separately, it requires but a trifling effort of the fancy to find among them towers, ramparts and moats, steeples and domes, in great abundance; but when taken as a whole, and viewed from the opposite bank of the river, they present the appearance of a once magnificent city in ruins. Not only are they exceedingly beautiful in themselves, but the surrounding scenery is highly attractive, for the mountains seem to have huddled themselves together for the purpose of looking down and admiring the winding and rapid stream. With regard to historical and legendary associations, the Painted Rocks are singularly barren; in this particular,

however, they are like the entire valley of the French Broad, where relics of a bygone people are few and far between. The rugged aspect of this country would seem to imply that it was never regularly inhabited by the Indians, but was their hunting ground; and what would appear to strengthen this idea is the fact that it is, even at the present day, particularly famous for its game.

On the day that I returned from my trip down the French Broad the weather was very showery, and the consequence was, the rain was occasionally employed as an apology for stopping and enjoying a quiet conversation with the people on the road. At one of the places where I halted there was a contest going on between two Whigs concerning the talents of the honourable gentleman who represents the famous county of Buncombe in Congress. The men were both strongly attached to the representative, and the contest consisted in their efforts to excel each other in complimenting their friend; and the climax of the argument seemed to be that Mr. Clingman was not "*some pumpkins*," but "PUMPKINS." The strangeness of this expression attracted my attention, and when an opportunity offered I questioned the *successful* disputant as to the origin and meaning of the phrase he had employed, and the substance of his reply was as follows:—

An old lady was once occupying herself cleaning some tripe on the hearth, before a large fire, over which hung a pot of boiling pumpkins. An accident having happened to the pot, it unfortunately fell to the hearth and *mingled its contents with the refuse of the lady's tripe.* The calamity was more than she could bear with fortitude, whereupon she made a desperate effort to save a little of the pumpkin sauce. She did this by taking up in her hands a portion of the doubtful mixture, and lifting it to her nose, and finding it rather pure exclaimed—*Pumpkins,* and threw it back into the pot. She took up another portion and applying it to the previous test, exclaimed—*Some pumpkins,* and threw that also into the pot. And so she continued her song of *pumpkins* and *some pumpkins* until the entire mess of pumpkins was secured and *saved.*

At another of the houses where I tarried for an hour, it was my fortune to arrive just in time to witness the conclusion of a domestic quarrel between a young husband and his wife. On subsequently inquiring into the history of this affectionate couple, I obtained the following particulars: The young man was reported to be a very weak-minded individual, and ever since his marriage had been exceedingly jealous of his wife, who (as I had seen) was very beautiful, but known to be perfectly true to her husband. Jealousy, however, was the rage of the man, and he was constantly making himself very ridiculous. His wife remonstrated, but at the same time appreciated his folly, and acted accordingly. On one occasion she was politely informed by her husband that he was very unhappy, and intended to hang himself. "Very well," replied the wife, "I hope you will have a good time." The husband was desperate, and having obtained a rope, and carefully adjusted a certain stool, he slipped the former over his head, and, when he knew that his wife was looking on, he swung himself to a cross-beam of his cabin. In playing his trick, however, he unfortunately kicked over the stool (which he had placed in a convenient spot for future use in regaining his feet,) and was well-nigh losing his life in reality, but was saved by the timely assistance of his wife. His first remark on being cut down was, "Jane, won't you please go after the doctor? I've twisted my neck dreadfully."

I also picked up, while travelling along the French Broad, the following bit of history connected with one of the handsomest plantations on that river. About forty years ago, a young girl and her brother (who was a mere boy) found themselves in this portion of North Carolina, strangers, orphans, friendless, and with only the moneyed inheritance of one hundred and fifty dollars. With this money, the girl bought a piece of land, and, her little brother having died, she hired herself out as a housekeeper. In process of time she married, gave her little property into the keeping of her husband, who squandered it, died a drunkard, and left her without a penny. By the kindness of a friend she borrowed a couple of hundred dollars, and came to Ashville and opened a boarding-house. In the course of five years she made

ten thousand dollars, married a second time, and by the profligacy and death of her second husband again lost every penny of her property. Years elapsed, and the unceasing industry of the poor widow was recompensed by the smiles of fortune, and she is now the owner of a large and valuable plantation, which is the fruit of her own individual toil, and a number of strong and manly sons are the comforts of her old age.

CHAPTER XXVI.

BLACK MOUNTAIN.

ASHVILLE, NORTH CAROLINA.

TWENTY-FIVE miles from this place, in a northerly direction, stands *Black Mountain*, which is the gloomy looking patriarch of the Alleghanies, and claimed to be the most elevated point of land eastward of the Mississippi. It is nearly seven thousand feet high, and, with its numerous pinnacles, covers an area of territory which must measure in length a distance of at least twenty miles. Unlike its fellows in this Southern land, it is covered by a dense forest from base to summit, where may be found nearly every variety of American trees, from the willow and the elm, to the oak and the Canada fir; and it is the parent of at least a hundred streams. Not a rood of its rocky and yet fertile surface has ever been cultivated, and its chief inhabitants are the panther, the bear, and the deer. Almost its only human denizen is one Frederick Burnet, a "mighty hunter," who is now upwards of forty years of age, and is said to have slain between five hundred and six hundred bears upon this mountain alone. To obtain an adequate idea of its height and grandeur, it should be viewed from at least a dozen points of the compass, and with regard to the circular and apparently boundless panorama which it commands, it can be far better imagined than described. On questioning one of the wild natives of the region as to the character of this prospect, he replied: "Good God! sir, it looks down upon every seaport in the United States, and across the whole of Mexico." On learning this truly remarkable circumstance, my curiosity was of course excited, and I questioned my informant as to the facilities of looking off from the peak. "Directly on the highest point," said he, "stands a single fir-tree,

which you have to climb, and thus look down on all creation." "And how do you reach the summit?" I continued. "O! it's a very easy matter, stranger; you only have to *walk* about six miles, and right straight *up* the roughest country you ever *did* see."

With this intelligence I was fully satisfied, and thereupon concluded that I should waste none of my strength merely for the privilege of "climbing a tree," even though it were the most elevated in the land. One of my Ashville friends, however, to whom I had brought letters of introduction, spoke to me of the Black Mountain in the most enthusiastic terms, said that I ought to visit it, and added that he had got up a party of one dozen gentlemen, including himself, who were resolved upon visiting the foot of the mountain in my company. They were described as lovers of scenery, anglers, and hunters, and it was proposed that we should go on horseback, though accompanied by a kind of tender, consisting of a small waggon load of provisions, fishing-rods, and guns, which was to be under the especial charge of an old negro named Sam Drymond. I was of course delighted with this arrangement, and, as the expedition was accomplished to the satisfaction of all concerned, I will give an account of its principal incidents.

Our cavalcade started at the break of day, and, as Miss Fortune would have it, in what we imagined a morning shower. It so happened, however, that it rained almost without ceasing until we reached our place of destination, which was a log shantee not far from the base of the Black Mountain, and about six miles from its summit. Our course lay up the valley of *the Swannanoah*, which, in spite of the rain, I could not but admire for its varied beauties. This river rises on the Black Mountain, is a charming tributary of the French Broad, from five to twenty yards in width, cold and clear, very rapid, and throughout its entire length is overshaded by a most luxuriant growth of graceful and sweet-scented trees and vines. The plantations on this stream are highly-cultivated, the surrounding scenery is mountainous, graceful, and picturesque, and among the small but numerous waterfalls, which make the first half of

its course exceedingly romantic, may be enjoyed the finest of trout fishing.

To describe the appearance of our party as we ascended the Swannanoah, through the mud and rain, is impossible, without employing a military phrase. We looked more like a party of "used-up" cavaliers, returning from an unfortunate siege, than one in pursuit of pleasure; and in spite of our efforts to be cheerful, a few of our faces were lengthened to an uncommon degree. Some of our company were decided characters, and a variety of professions were represented. Our captain was a banker, highly intelligent, and rode a superb horse; our second captain was a Lambert-like gentleman, with scarlet Mexican cloak: we had an editor with us, whose principal appendage was a long pipe; there was also a young physician, wrapped up in a blue blanket; also a young graduate, enveloped in a Spanish cloak, and riding a beautiful pony, also an artist, and then a farmer or two; also a merchant; and, last of all, came the deponent, with an immense plaid blanket wrapped round his body, and a huge pair of boots hanging from his legs, whose romantic appearance was somewhat enhanced by the fact that his horse was the ugliest in the country. Long before reaching our place of destination, a freshet came pouring down the bed of the Swannanoah, and, as we had to ford it at least twenty times, we met with a variety of mishaps, which were particularly amusing. The most unique incident, however, was as follows:—The party having crossed a certain ford, a motion was made that we should wait and see that old Drymond made the passage in safety. We did so, and spent about one hour on the margin of the stream, in a most impatient mood, for the old man travelled very slowly, and the clouds were pouring down the rain most abundantly. And what greatly added to our discomfort was the fact, that our horses got into a cluster of nettles, which made them almost unmanageable. In due time the negro made his appearance, and plunged into the stream. Hardly had he reached the middle, before his horse became unruly, and having broken entirely loose from the waggon, disappeared down the stream, leaving the vehicle in a most dangerous position, near

the centre thereof, with a tremendous torrent rushing on either side, and the poor negro in the attitude of despair. He was indeed almost frightened to death; but his wo-begone appearance was so comical, that in spite of his real danger, and the prayer he offered, the whole party burst into a roar of laughter. One remark made by the negro was this: "O, Massa, dis is de last o' poor old Drymond—his time's come." But it so happened that our old friend was rescued from a watery grave: but I am compelled to state that our provisions, which were now transferred, with old Drymond, to the back of the horse, were greatly damaged, and we resumed our journey with our spirits at a much lower ebb than the stream which had caused the mishap.

We arrived at a vacant cabin on the mountain, our place of destination, about noon, when the weather became clear and our drooping spirits were revived. The cabin stood on the margin of the Swannanoah, and was completely hemmed in by immense forest trees. Our first movement was to fasten and feed the horses; and having satisfied our own appetites with a cold lunch, a portion of the company went fishing, while the remainder secured the services of the hunter Burnet, and some half-dozen of his hounds, and endeavoured to kill a deer. At the sunset hour the anglers returned with a lot of two or three hundred trout, and the hunters with a handsome doe. With this abundant supply of forest delicacies, and a few "knick-knacks" that we had brought with us, we managed to get up a supper of the first water, but each man was his own cook, and our fingers and hands were employed in the place of knives and plates. While this interesting business was going on we despatched Burnet after a fiddler, who occupied a cabin near his own, and when the musical gentleman made his appearance, we were ready for the "evening's entertainment."

We devoted two hours to a series of fantastic dances, and when we became tired of this portion of the frolic, we spent an hour or so in singing songs, and wound up the evening by telling stories. Of the hundred and one that were related, only two were at all connected with the Black Mountain; but as these

were Indian legends, and gathered from different sources by the gentlemen present, I will preserve them in this letter for the edification of those interested in such matters. On the north side of Black Mountain there was once a cave, where all the animals in the world were closely confined; and before that time they had never been known to roam over the mountains as they do now. All these animals were in the keeping of an old Cherokee chief. This man, who had a mischievous son, often came home with a fine bear or deer, but would never tell his son or any other person where he found so much valuable game. The son did not like this, and on one occasion, when his father went out after food, he hid himself among the trees, and watched his movements. He saw the old man go to the cave already mentioned, and, as he pushed away a big stone, out ran a fine buck, which he killed with an arrow, and then rolled back the stone. When the old man was gone home with his deer the boy went to the cave, and thought that he would try his luck in killing game. He rolled away the stone, when out jumped a wolf, which so frightened him that he forgot to replace the stone, and before he knew what he was about all the animals made their escape, and were fleeing down the mountain in every possible direction. They made a dreadful noise for a while, but finally came together in pairs, and so have continued to multiply down to the present time. When the father found out what the foolishness of his son had accomplished, he became very unhappy, and in less than a week he disappeared, and was never heard of again. The boy also became very unhappy, and spent many days in trying to find his father, but it was all in vain. As a last resort, he tried an old Indian experiment, which consisted in shooting arrows, to find out in which direction the old man had gone. The boy fired an arrow towards the north, but it returned and fell at his feet, and he knew that his father had not travelled in that direction. He also fired one towards the east and the south and the west, but they all came back in the same manner. He then thought that he would fire one directly above his head, and it so happened that this arrow never returned, and so the boy

knew that his father had gone to the spirit-land. The Great Spirit was angry with the Cherokee nation, and, to punish it for the offence of the foolish boy, he tore away the cave from the side of the Black Mountain, and left only a large cliff in its place, which is now a conspicuous feature, and he then declared that the time would come when another race of men should possess the mountains where the Cherokees had flourished for many generations.

Another legend was as follows:—Once, in the olden times, when the animals of the earth had the power of speech, a red deer and a terrapin met on the Black Mountain. The deer ridiculed the terrapin, boasted of his own fleetness, and proposed that the twain should run a race. The creeping animal assented to the proposition. The race was to extend from the Black Mountain to the summit of the third pinnacle extending to the eastward. The day was then fixed, and the animals separated. During the intervening time the cunning terrapin secured the services of three of its fellows resembling itself in appearance, and having given them particular directions, stationed them upon the several peaks over which the race was to take place. The appointed day arrived, and the deer as well as the first-mentioned terrapin, were faithfully on the ground. All things being ready, the word was given, and away started the deer at a break-neck speed. Just as he reached the summit of the first hill he heard the shout of a terrapin, and as he supposed it to be his antagonist, he was greatly perplexed, but continued on his course. On reaching the top of the second hill, he heard another shout of defiance, and was more astonished than ever, but onward still did he continue. Just before reaching the summit of the third hill, the deer heard what he supposed to be the same shout, and he gave up the race in despair. On returning to the starting-place, he found his antagonist in a calm and collected mood, and, when he demanded an explanation, the terrapin solved the mystery, and then begged the deer to remember that mind could sometimes accomplish what was often beyond the reach of the swiftest legs.

With regard to the manner in which our party spent the

night at the foot of Black Mountain, I can only say that we slept upon the floor, and that our saddles were our only pillows. The morning of the next day we devoted to an unsuccessful hunt after a bear; and a portion of us having thrown the fly a sufficient length of time to load old Drymond with trout, we all started on our return to Ashville, and reached the village just as the sun was sinking behind the western mountains.

CHAPTER XXVII.

THE CATAWBA COUNTRY.

NORTH COVE, NORTH CAROLINA.

I NOW write from a log cabin situated on the Catawba river, and in one of the most beautiful valleys. My ride from Ashville to Burnsville, a distance of over forty miles, was unattended by a single interesting incident, and afforded only one mountain prospect that caused me to rein in my horse. But the prospect alluded to embraced the entire outline of Bald Mountain, which, being one of the loftiest in this section of country, and particularly barren, presented a magnificent appearance. On the extreme summit of this mountain is a very large and an intensely cold spring of water, and in its immediate vicinity a small cave and the ruins of a log cabin, which are associated with a singular being named David Greer, who once made this upper world his home. He first appeared in this country about fifty years ago; his native land, the story of his birth, and his early history, were alike unknown. Soon after his arrival among the mountains, he fell desperately in love with the daughter of a farmer, but his suit was rejected by the maiden, and strenuously opposed by all her friends. Soon after this disappointment the lover suddenly disappeared, and was subsequently found residing on Bald Mountain, in the cave already mentioned. Here he lived the life of a literary recluse, and is said to have written a singular work upon religion, and another which purported to be a treatise on human government. In the latter production he proclaimed himself the sole proprietor of Bald Mountain, and made it known to the world that all who should ever become his neighbours must submit to the laws he had himself enacted. The prominent actions of his life were

"few and far between," but particularly infamous. The first that brought him into notice was as follows:—A few years after it was ascertained that he had taken possession of this mountain, the authorities of the county sent a messenger to Greer, and demanded a poll-tax of seventy-five cents. The hermit said he would attend to it on the next court-day, and his word was accepted. On the day in question Greer punctually made his appearance, but, instead of paying over the money, he pelted the windows of the court-house with stones, and drove the judges, lawyers, and clients, all out of the village, and then, with rifle in hand, returned to his mountain dwelling. For some months after this event he amused himself by mutilating all the cattle which he happened to discover on what he called his domain, and it is said was in the habit of trying the power of his rifle by shooting upon the plantations of his neighbours. The crowning event of David Greer's life, however, consisted in his shooting to the ground in cold blood, and in the broad daylight, a man named Higgins. The only excuse that he offered for committing this murder was, that the deceased had been found hunting for deer on that portion of land which he claimed as his own. For this offence Greer was brought to trial, and acquitted on the ground of insanity. When this decision was made known, the criminal was greatly enraged, and, when released, started for his cabin, muttering loud and deep curses against the *injustice* of the laws. In process of time a number of attempts were made to take his life, and it was a common occurrence with him to be awakened at midnight by a ball passing through the door of his cabin. After living upon the mountain for a period of twenty years, he finally determined to abandon his solitary life, and took up his abode on one of the settlements on the Tennessee side of Bald Mountain. Here, for a year or two, he worked regularly in an iron forge, but having had a dispute with a fellow-workman, swore that he would shoot him within five hours, and started after his rifle. The offending party was named Tompkins, and after consulting with his friends as to what course he ought to pursue, in view of the uttered threat, he was advised to take the law in his own hands. He took this advice, and, as David

Greer was discovered walking along the road with rifle in hand, Tompkins shot him through the heart, and the burial-place of the hermit is now unknown. Public opinion was on the side of Tompkins, and he was never summoned to account for the defensive murder he had committed.

In coming from Burnsville to this place, I enjoyed two mountain landscapes, which were supremely beautiful and imposing. The first was a northern view of Black Mountain from the margin of the South Toe river, and all its cliffs, defiles, ravines, and peaks seemed as light, dreamlike, and airy as the clear blue world in which they floated. The stupendous pile appeared to have risen from the earth with all its glories in their prime, as if to join the newly-risen sun in his passage across the heavens. The middle distance of the landscape was composed of two wood-crowned hills which stood before me like a pair of loving brothers, and then came a luxuriant meadow, where a noble horse was quietly cropping his food; while the immediate foreground of the picture consisted of a marvellously beautiful stream, which glided swiftly by, over a bed of golden and scarlet pebbles. The only sounds that fell upon my ear, as I gazed upon this scene, were the murmurings of a distant waterfall, and the hum of insect wings.

The other prospect that I witnessed was from the summit of the Blue Ridge, looking in the direction of the Catawba. It was a wilderness of mountains, whose foundations could not be fathomed by the eye, while in the distance, towering above all the peaks, rose the singular and fantastic form of *the Table Mountain.* Not a sign of the breathing human world could be seen in any direction, and the only living creature which appeared to my view was a solitary eagle, wheeling to and fro far up towards the zenith of the sky.

From the top of the Blue Ridge I descended a winding ravine four miles in length, where the road, even at mid-day, is in deep shadow, and then I emerged into the North Cove. This charming valley is twelve miles long, from a half to a whole mile in width, completely surrounded with mountains, highly-cultivated, watered by the Catawba, and inhabited by intelligent and worthy

farmers. At a certain house where I tarried to dine on my way up the valley, I was treated in a manner that would have put to the blush people of far greater pretensions; and, what made a deep impression on my mind, was the fact that I was waited upon by two sisters, about ten years of age, who were remarkably beautiful and sprightly. One of them had flaxen hair and blue eyes, and the other deep black hair and eyes. Familiar as I had been for weeks past with the puny and ungainly inhabitants of the mountain tops, these two human flowers filled my heart with a delightful sensation. May the lives of those two darlings be as peaceful and beautiful as the stream upon which they live! The prominent pictorial feature of the North Cove is a mountain called *the Hawk's Bill*, on account of its resemblance to the beak of a mammoth bird, the length of the bill being about fifteen hundred feet. It is visible from nearly every part of the valley, and to my fancy is a more *picturesque* object than the Table Mountain, which is too regular at the sides and top to satisfy the eye. The table part of this mountain, however, is twenty-five hundred feet high, and therefore worthy of its fame.

The cabin where I am stopping at the present time is located at the extreme upper end of the North Cove. It is the residence of the best guide in the country, and the most convenient lodging place for those who would visit the Hawk's Bill and Table Mountains, already mentioned, as well as the Lindville Pinnacle, the Catawba Cave, the Cake Mountain, the Lindville Falls, and the Roan Mountain.

The *Lindville Pinnacle* is a mountain peak, surmounted by a pile of rocks, upon which you may recline at your ease, and look down upon a complete series of rare and gorgeous scenes. On one side is a precipice which seems to descend to the very bowels of the earth; in another direction you have a full view of *Short-off Mountain*, only about a mile off, which is a perpendicular precipice several thousand feet high, and the abrupt termination of a long range of mountains; in another direction still, the eye falls upon a brotherhood of mountain peaks which are particularly ragged and fantastic in their formation—now shooting forward, as if to look down into the valleys, and now looming to the sky,

as if to pierce it with their pointed summits; and in another direction you look across what seems to be a valley from eighty to a hundred miles wide, which is bounded by a range of mountains that seem to sweep across the world with a triumphal march.

The *Catawba Cave*, situated on the Catawba river, is entered by a fissure near the base of a mountain, and is reputed to be one mile in length. It has a great variety of chambers, which vary in height from six to twenty feet; its walls are chiefly composed of a porous limestone, through which the water is continually dripping; and along the entire length flows a cold and clear stream, which varies from five to fifteen inches in depth. This cave is indeed a curious affair, though the trouble and fatigue attending a thorough exploration far outweigh the satisfaction which it affords. But there is one arm of the cave which has never been explored, and an admirable opportunity is therefore offered for the adventurous to make themselves famous by revealing some of the hidden wonders of nature.

The *Ginger Cake Mountain* derives its very poetical name from a singular pile of rocks occupying its extreme summit. The pile is composed of two masses of rock of different materials and form, which are so arranged as to stand on a remarkably small base. The lower section is composed of a rough slate stone, and its form is that of an inverted pyramid; but the upper section of the pile consists of an oblong slab of solid granite, which surmounts the lower section in a horizontal position, presenting the appearance of a work of art. The lower section is thirty feet in altitude, while the upper one is thirty-two feet in length, eighteen in breadth, and nearly two feet in thickness. The appearance of this rocky wonder is exceedingly tottering; and though we may be assured that it has stood upon that eminence perhaps for a thousand years, yet it is impossible to tarry within its shadow without a feeling of insecurity. The individual who gave the Ginger Cake Mountain its outlandish name was a hermit named Watson, who resided at the foot of the mountain about fifty years ago, but who died in 1816. He lived in a small cabin, and entirely alone. His history was a mystery to every

one but himself, and, though remarkably eccentric, he was noted for his amiability. He had given up the world, like his brother hermit of the Bald Mountain, on account of a disappointment in love; and the utter contempt which he ever afterwards manifested for the gentler sex, was one of his most singular traits of character. Whenever a party of ladies paid him a visit, which was frequently the case, he invariably treated them politely, but would never *speak* to them; he even went so far in expressing his dislike as to consume for firewood, after the ladies were gone, the topmast rail of his yard-fence, over which they had been compelled to pass, on their way into his cabin. That old Watson "fared sumptuously every day" could not be denied, but whence came the money that supported him no one could divine. He seldom molested the wild animals of the mountain where he lived, and his chief employments seemed to be *raising peacocks*, and making garments for his own use, which were all elegantly trimmed with the feathers of his favourite bird. The feathery suit in which he kept himself constantly arrayed he designated as his *culgee;* the meaning of which word could never be ascertained; and long after the deluded being had passed away from among the living, he was spoken of as Culgee Watson, and is so remembered to this day.

I come now to speak of *the Lindville Falls*, which are situated on the Lindville river, a tributary of the beautiful Catawba. They are literally embosomed among mountains, and long before seeing them you hear their musical roar. The scenery about them is as wild as it was a hundred years ago—not even a pathway has yet been made to guide the tourist into the stupendous gorge where they reign supreme. At the point in question the Lindville is about one hundred and fifty feet broad, and though its waters have come down their parent mountains at a most furious speed, they here make a more desperate plunge than they ever dared to attempt before, when they find themselves in a deep pool, and suddenly hemmed in by a barrier of grey granite, which crosses the entire bed of the river. In their desperation, however, they finally work a passage through the solid rock, and after filling another hollow with foam, they make a desperate

leap of at least one hundred feet, and find a resting-place in an immense pool, which one might easily imagine to be bottomless. And then, as if attracted by the astonishing feats performed by the waters, a number of lofty and exceedingly fantastic cliffs have gathered themselves together in the immediate neighbourhood, and are ever peering over each other's shoulders into the depths below. But as the eye wanders from the surrounding cliffs, it falls upon an isolated column several hundred feet high, around which are clustered in the greatest profusion the most beautiful vines and flowers. This column occupies a conspicuous position a short distance below the falls, and it were an easy matter to imagine it a monument erected by Nature to celebrate her own creative power.

With a liberal hand, indeed, has she planted her forest trees in every imaginable place; but, with a view of even surpassing herself, she has filled the gorge with a variety of caverns, which astonish the beholder, and almost cause him to dread an attack from a brotherhood of spirits. But how futile is my effort to give an adequate idea of the Lindville Falls and their surrounding attractions! When I attempted to sketch them I threw away my pencil in despair; and I now feel that I should be doing my pen a kindness if I were to consume what I have written. I will give this paragraph to the world, however, trusting that those who may hereafter visit the Lindville Falls, will award to me a little credit for my *will* if not for my *deed*.

To be in keeping with my wayward wanderings in this Alpine wilderness, it now becomes my duty to speak of the *Roan Mountain* and the *Grand Father*. By actual measurement the former is only seventy feet lower than the Black Mountain, and consequently measures well-nigh seven thousand feet. It derives its name from the circumstance that it is often covered with snow, and at such times is of a roan colour. It lies in the States of North Carolina and Tennessee, and has three prominent peaks, which are all entirely destitute of trees. The highest of them has a clearing containing several thousand acres, and the cattle and horses of the surrounding farmers resort to it in immense numbers, for the purpose of feeding upon the fine and luxuriant

grass which grows there in great abundance. The ascent to the top of this peak is gradual from all directions except one; but on the north it is quite perpendicular, and to one standing near the brow of the mighty cliff the scene is exceedingly imposing and fearful. That it commands an uninterrupted view of what appears to be the entire world, may be readily imagined. When I was there I observed no less than three thunder-storms performing their uproarious feats in three several valleys, while the remaining portions of the lower world were enjoying a deep blue atmosphere. In visiting Roan Mountain you have to travel on horseback, and, by starting at the break-of-day, you may spend two hours on the highest peak, and be home again on the same evening about the sunset hour.

In accounting for the baldness which characterises the Roan Mountain, the Catawba Indians relate the following tradition: There was once a time when all the nations of the earth were at war with the Catawbas, and had proclaimed their determination to conquer and possess their country. On hearing this intelligence the Catawbas became greatly enraged, and sent a challenge to all their enemies, and dared them to fight on the summit of the Roan. The challenge was accepted, and no less than three famous battles were fought—the streams of the entire land were red with blood, a number of tribes became extinct, and the Catawbas carried the day. Whereupon it was that the Great Spirit caused the forests to wither from the three peaks of the Roan Mountain, where the battles were fought; and wherefore it is that the flowers which grow upon this mountain are chiefly of a crimson hue, for they are nourished by the blood of the slain.

One of the finest views from the Roan Mountain is that of the Grand Father, which is said to be altogether the wildest and most fantastic mountain in the whole Alleghany range. It is reputed to be 5600 feet high, and particularly famous for its black bears and other large game. Its principal human inhabitants, *par excellence*, for the last twenty years, have been a man named *Jim Riddle*, and his loving spouse, whose cabin was near its summit. A more successful hunter than Jim never scaled a

precipice; and the stories related of him would fill a volume. One of the funniest that I now remember, is briefly as follows:—

He was out upon a hunting expedition, and having come to one of his bear traps, (made of logs, weighing about a thousand pounds, and set with a kind of figure four,) the bait of which happened to be misplaced, he thoughtlessly laid down his gun, and went under the trap to arrange the bait. In doing this, he handled the bait-hook a little too roughly, and was consequently caught in the place of a bear. He chanced to have a small hatchet in his belt, with which, under every disadvantage, he succeeded in cutting his way out. He was one day and one night in doing this, however, and his narrow escape caused him to abandon the habit of swearing, and become a religious man.

To the comprehension of Jim Riddle, the Grand Father was the highest mountain in the world. He used to say that he had read of the Andes, but did not believe that they were half as high as the mountain on which he lived. His reason for this opinion was, that when a man stood on the top of the Grand Father, it was perfectly obvious that *"all the other mountains in the world lay rolling from it, even to the sky."*

Jim Riddle is said to have been a remarkably certain marksman; and one of his favourite pastimes, in the winter, was to shoot at snow-balls. On these occasions, his loving wife, Betsy, was always by his side, to laugh at him when he missed his mark, and to applaud when successful. And it is reported of them, that they were sometimes in the habit of spending entire days in this *elevated* recreation. But enough: Jim Riddle is now an altered man. His cabin has long since been abandoned, and he has become a travelling preacher, and is universally respected for his amiability, and matter-of-fact intelligence.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE MOUNTAINS AND THEIR PEOPLE.

ELIZABETHTON, TENNESSEE.

THE prominent circumstance attending my journey from the North Cove to this place was, that it brought me out of the great mountain wilderness of Georgia and North Carolina into a well-cultivated and more level country. For two months past have I spent my days on horseback, and the majority of my nights in the rudest of cabins; and as I am now to continue my journey in a stage-coach, it is meet that I should indite a general letter, descriptive of the region through which I have passed. In coming from Dahlonega to this place, I have travelled in a zigzag course upwards of four hundred miles, but the intervening distance, in a direct line, would not measure more than two hundred. The entire country is mountainous, and for the most part remains in its original state of nature. To the botanist and the geologist this section of the Union is unquestionably the most interesting eastward of the Mississippi; for we have here nearly every variety of forest trees known in the land, as well as plants and flowers in the greatest abundance, while the mountains, which are of a primitive formation, abound in every known variety of minerals. That the scenery of this region is highly interesting, I hope my readers have already been convinced. More beautiful streams can nowhere be found on the face of the earth. But, when we come to speak of lake scenery, the South must yield the palm to the North. Not a single sheet of water, deserving the name of lake, have I yet seen in this Southern land, and yet every mountain seems to be well supplied with the largest and the coldest of springs. I know not whether this fact has

been explained by our scientific men, but to me it is indeed a striking peculiarity. The valleys, too, of this region, are remarkably narrow, and the majority of them might with more propriety be called immense ravines. The skies, however, which canopy this Alpine land, appeared to me to be particularly blue, and as to the clouds which gather around the mountains at the sunset hour, they are gorgeous beyond compare.

With regard to climate, I know of no section of country that can be compared with the highlands of Georgia and North Carolina. It is but seldom that a foot of snow covers the earth even in the severest winters; and, though the days of midsummer are very warm, they are seldom sultry, and the nights are invariably sufficiently cool to make one or two blankets comfortable. Fevers and other diseases, peculiar to the sea-side of the Alleghanies, are hardly known among their inhabitants, and heretofore the majority of people have died of old age. I would not intimate that they are afflicted with an epidemic at the present time, but I do say that there are many households in this region, which have been rendered very desolate by the Mexican war. When our *kingly* president commanded the American people to leave the plough in the furrow and invade a neighbouring republic, the mountaineers of Georgia and the Carolinas poured down into the valley almost without bidding their mothers, and wives, and sisters, a final adieu; and the bones of at least one half of these brave men are now mouldering away on the desert sands of the far South.

Generally speaking, the soil of this country is fertile, yielding the best of corn, potatoes, and rye, but only an average quality of wheat, on account of the late frosts. In some of the more extensive valleys, the apple and the peach arrive at perfection; and while the former are manufactured into cider, out of the latter the mountaineers make a very palatable brandy. The principal revenue of the people, however, is derived from the business of raising cattle, which is practised to a considerable extent. The mountain ranges afford an abundance of the sweetest grazing food, and all that the farmer has to do in the autumn is to hunt up his stock, which have now become excessively fat, and

drive them to the Charleston or Baltimore market. The only drawback to this business consists in the fact, that the cattle in certain sections of the country are subject to what is called the milk sickness. This disease is supposed to be caused by a poisonous dew which gathers on the grass, and is said not only to have destroyed a great many cattle in other years, but frequently caused the death of entire families who may have partaken of the unwholesome milk. It is a dreaded disease, and principally fatal in the autumn. From the foregoing remarks it will be seen that a mountain farmer may be an agriculturist, and yet have an abundance of time to follow any other employment that he has a passion for; and the result of this fact is, that he is generally a faithful disciple of the immortal Nimrod.

All the cabins that I have visited have been ornamented by at least one gun, and more than one half of the inhabitants have usually been hounds. That the mountaineers are poor, is a matter of course, and the majority of their cabins are cheerless places indeed, to harbour the human frame for life; but the people are distinguished for their hospitality, and always place before the stranger the choicest of their store. Bacon, game, and milk, are their staple articles of food, and honey is their principal luxury. In religion, generally speaking, they are Methodists and Baptists, and are distinguished for their sobriety. They have but few opportunities of hearing good preaching, but I have never entered more than three or four cabins where I did not see a copy of the Bible. The limited knowledge they possess has come to them directly from Heaven as it were, and, from the necessity of the case, their children are growing up in the most deplorable ignorance. Whenever one of these poor families happened to learn from my conversation that I was a resident of New York, the interest with which they gazed upon me, and listened to every word, was both agreeable and painful. It made me happy to communicate what little I happened to know, but pained me to think upon their isolated and uncultivated manner of life. Give me the wilderness for a day, or month, but for life I must be amid the haunts of refinement and civilisation. As to the slave popu-

lation of the mountain districts, it is so limited that I can hardly express an opinion with regard to their condition. Not more than one white man in ten (perhaps I ought to say twenty) is sufficiently wealthy to support a slave, and those who do possess them are in the habit of treating them as intelligent beings, and in the most kindly manner. As I have found it to be the case on the seabord, the slaves residing among the mountains are the happiest and most independent portion of the population; and I have had many a one pilot me over the mountains who would not have exchanged places even with his master. They have a comfortable house, and no debts to pay: every thing they need in the way of clothing and wholesome food is ever at their command, and they have free access to the churches and the Sunday schools of the land. What more do the poor of any country possess that can add to their temporal happiness?

Another, and of course the most limited portion of the population occupying this mountain country, is what might be called the aristocracy or gentry. Generally speaking, they are descended from the best of families, and moderately wealthy. They are fond of good living, and their chief business is to make themselves as comfortable as possible. They esteem solid enjoyment more than display, and are far more intelligent (so far as books and the world are concerned) than the same class of people at the North. The majority of Southern gentlemen, I believe, would be glad to see the institution of slavery abolished, if it could be brought about without reducing them to beggary. But they hate a *political* abolitionist as they do the very—*Father of Lies;* and for this want of affection I do n t see that they deserve to be blamed. The height of a Southern man's ambition is to be a gentleman in every particular—in word, thought, and deed; and to be a perfect gentleman, in my opinion, is to be a Christian. And with regard to the much talked-of hospitality of the wealthier classes in the South, I can only say that my own experience ought to make me very eloquent in their praise. Not only does the genuine feeling exist here; but a Southern gentleman gives such expression to his feeling by his home-like treatment of you, that

to be truly hospitable you might imagine had been the principal study of his life.

But the music of the "mellow horn" is ringing in my ear, and in an hour from this time I shall have thrown myself into a stage-coach, and be on my way up the long and broad valley of Virginia.

CHAPTER XXIX.

THE NAMELESS VALLEY.

THE NAMELESS VALLEY, VIRGINIA.

SINCE my last letter was written, my course of travel has led me towards the fountain-head of the Holston river, whose broad and highly-cultivated valley is bounded on the north-west by the Clinch Mountains, and on the south-east by the Iron Mountains. The agricultural and mineral advantages of this valley are manifold, and the towns and farms scattered along the stage-road all present a thriving and agreeable appearance. Along the bed of the Holston, agates and cornelians are found in considerable abundance; and though the scenery of its valley is merely beautiful, I know of no district in the world where caves and caverns are found in such great numbers. A zigzag tour along this valley alone will take the traveller to at least one dozen caves, many of which are said to be remarkably interesting. From my own observation, however, I know nothing about them; and so long as I retain my passion for the revealed productions of nature, I will leave the hidden ones to take care of themselves.

On reaching the pleasant little village of Abingdon, in Washington county, a friend informed me that I must not fail to visit the salt-works of Smythe county. I did so, and the following is my account of Saltville, which is the proper name for the place in question: Its site was originally a salt-lick, to which immense herds of elk, buffalo, and deer, were in the habit of resorting; subsequently, the Indians applied the privilege to themselves, and then an occasional hunter came here for his supplies; but the regular business of transforming the water into salt did not commence until the year 1790. Saltville is located at the head of a valley near the base of the Clinch Mountains, and about

one mile from the Holston river. All the population of the place, numbering perhaps three hundred inhabitants, are engaged in the manufacture of salt. The water here is said to be the strongest and purest in the world. When tested by a salometer, graded for saturation at twenty-five degrees, it ranges from twenty to twenty-two degrees, and twenty gallons of water will yield one bushel of salt, which weighs fifty pounds (and not fifty-six as in the North,) and is sold at the rate of twenty cents per bushel, or one dollar and twenty cents per barrel. The water is brought from a depth of two hundred and twenty feet by means of three artesian wells, which keep five furnaces or salt-blocks, of eighty-four kettles each, in constant employment, and produce about two thousand bushels per day. The water is raised by means of horse power, and twenty-five teams are constantly employed in supplying the furnaces with wood. The salt manufactured here is acknowledged to be superior in quality to that made on the Kanawha, in this state, or at Syracuse, in New-York, but the Northern establishments are by far the most extensive. The section of country supplied from this quarter is chiefly composed of Tennessee and Alabama; generally speaking, there is but one shipment made during the year, which is in the spring, and by means of flat boats built expressly for the purpose. A dozen or two of these boats are always ready for business, and when the Holston is swollen by a freshet, they are loaded and manned at the earliest possible moment, and away the singing boatmen go down the wild, winding, and narrow, but picturesque stream, to their desired havens. The section of country supplied by the Kanawha is the north-west and the extreme south, while Syracuse, Liverpool, and Turk's Island, supply the Atlantic seabord. The Saltville reservoir of water seems to be inexhaustible, and it is supposed would give active employment to at least a dozen new furnaces. As already stated, the yielding wells are somewhat over two hundred feet deep; but within a stone's throw of these, other wells have been sunk to the depth of four, five, and six hundred feet, without obtaining a particle of the valuable liquid. The business of Saltville is carried on by private enterprise altogether, and the principal proprietor and director

is a gentleman who comes from that noble stock which has given to this country such men as Patrick Henry and William H. Preston. I am at present the guest of this gentleman, and therefore refrain from giving his name to the public; but as his plantation is decidedly the most beautiful that I have seen in the whole Southern country, I must be permitted to give a particular description of it for the edification of my readers.

This heretofore nameless nook of the great world I have been permitted to designate as *The Nameless Valley*, and if I succeed in merely enumerating its charming features and associations, I feel confident that my letter will be read with pleasure. It is the centre of a domain comprising eight thousand acres of land, which covers a multitude of hills that are all thrown in shadow at the sunset hour by the Clinch Mountains. The valley in question is one mile long and three-quarters of a mile wide, and comprises exactly three hundred and thirty-three acres of green meadow land, unbroken by a single fence, but ornamented by about a dozen isolated trees, composed of at least half a dozen varieties, and the valley is watered by a tiny stream of the clearest water. It is completely surrounded with cone-like hills, which are nearly all highly-cultivated half-way up their sides, but crowned with a diadem of the most luxuriant forest trees. A little behind the hills, skirting the western side of the valley, are the picturesquely broken Clinch Mountains, whose outlines, and cliffs, and fissures, and ravines, may be distinctly seen from the opposite side of the valley, where the spacious and tastefully-porticoed mansion of the proprietor is located. Clustering immediately around this dwelling, but not so as to interrupt the view, are a number of very large willows, poplars, and elms, while the enclosed slope upon which it stands is covered with luxuriant grass, here and there enlivened by a stack of roses and other flowers. The numerous outhouses of the plantation are a little back of the main building, and consist of neatly-painted cabins, occupied by the negroes belonging to the estate, and numbering about one hundred souls; then come the stables, where no less than seventy-five horses are daily supplied with food; then we have a pasture on the hill-side, where thirty

or forty cows nightly congregate to be milked, and give suck to their calves; and then we have a mammoth spring, whose waters issue out of the mountain, making only about a dozen leaps, throwing themselves upon the huge wheel of an old mill, causing it to sing a kind of circling song from earliest dawn to the twilight hour. In looking to the westward from the spacious porticoes of the mansion, the eye falls upon only two objects which are at all calculated to destroy the natural solitude of the place, viz., a road which passes directly by the house at the foot of the lawn, and one small white cottage situated at the base of a hill on the opposite side of the valley. Instead of detracting from the scene, however, these objects actually make it more interesting, when the facts are remembered that in that cottage did the proprietor of this great estate first see the light, and that by its side are deposited the remains of five generations of his ancestors; and as to the road, the people who travel it all appear and move along just exactly as a poet would desire.

But to give my readers a more graphic idea of this truly delightful valley, I will enumerate the living pictures which attracted my attention from the book I was attempting to read one afternoon. I was in a commanding corner of the porch, and had closed the volume just as the sun was sinking behind the mountain. The sky was of a soft silvery hue, and almost cloudless, and the entire landscape was bathed in an exquisitely soft and delightful atmosphere. Not a breeze was stirring in the valley, and the cool shadows of the trees were twice as long as the trees themselves. The first noise that broke the silence of the scene was a slow thumping and creaking sound away down the road, and on casting my eyes in the right direction I discovered a large wain, or covered wagon, drawn by seven horses, and driven by a man who amused himself, as he lazily moved along, by snapping his whip at the plants by the road-side. I know not whence he came or whither he was going, but twenty minutes must have flown before he passed out of my view. At one time a flood of discord came to my ear from one of the huge poplars in the yard, and I could see that there was a terrible dispute going on between a lot of resident and strange

blackbirds; and, after they had ceased their noise, I could hear the chirping of the swallows, as they swooped after the insects, floating in the sunbeams, far away over the green valley. And now I heard a laugh and the sound of voices, proceeding from a party of ten negroes, who were returning from the fields where they had been cutting hay or hoeing corn. The neighing and stamping of a steed now attracted my attention, and I saw a superb blood horse attempting to get away from a negro groom, who was leading him along the road. The mellow tinkling of a bell and the lowing of cattle now came trembling on the air, and presently a herd of cows made their appearance, returning home from the far-off hills with udders brimming full, and raising up a dust as they lounged along. Now the sun dropped behind the hills, and one solitary night-hawk shot high up into the air, as if he had gone to welcome the evening star, which presently made its appearance from its blue watch-tower; and, finally, a dozen women came trooping from the cow-yard into the dairy-house, with well-filled milkpails on their heads, and looking like a troop of Egyptian water damsels. And then for one long hour did the spirits of repose and twilight hold complete possession of the valley, and no sound fell on my ear but the hum of insect wings.

But I was intending to mention the curiosities of the Nameless Valley. Foremost among these I would rank a small cave, on the south side, in which are deposited a curious collection of human bones. Many of them are very large, while others, which were evidently full grown, are exceedingly small. Among the female skulls I noticed one of a female that seemed to be perfectly beautiful, but small en ugh to have belonged to a child. The most curious specimen, however, found in this cave, is the skull of a man. It is entirely without a forehead, very narrow across the eyes, full and regularly rounded behind, and from the lower part of the ears are two bony projections, nearly two inches in length, which must have presented a truly terrible appearance when covered with flesh. The animal organs of this skull are remarkably full, and it is also greatly deficient in all the intellectual faculties. Another curiosity in this valley is a

bed of plaster, which lies in the immediate vicinity of a bed of slate, with a granite and limestone strata only a short distance off, the whole constituting a geological conglomeration that I never heard of before. But what is still more remarkable is the fact, that within this plaster bed was found the remains of an unknown animal, which must have been a mammoth indeed. I saw a grinder tooth belonging to this monster. It has a blackish appearance, measures about ten inches in length, weighs four pounds and a half, and was found only three feet from the surface. This tooth, as well as the skull already mentioned, were discovered by the proprietor of the valley, and, I am glad to learn, are about to be deposited by him in the National Museum at Washington. But another attractive feature in the Nameless Valley consists of a kind of Indian Herculaneum, where, deeply imbedded in sand and clay, are the remains of a town, whence have been brought to light a great variety of earthen vessels and curious utensils. Upon this spot, also, many shells have been found, which are said never to have been seen excepting on the shore of the Pacific. But all these things should be described by the antiquary, and I only mention them for the purpose of letting the world know that there is literally no end to the wonders of our beautiful land.

I did think of sketching a few of the many charming views which present themselves from the hills surrounding the Nameless Valley, but I am not exactly in the mood just now, and I will leave them "in their glory alone." Connected with a precipice on one of them, however, I have this incident to relate. For an hour or more had I been watching the evolutions of a superb bald-headed eagle above the valley, when, to my surprise, he suddenly became excited, and darted down with intense swiftness towards the summit of the cliff alluded to, and disappeared among the trees. A piercing shriek followed this movement, and I anticipated a combat between the eagle and a pair of fish-hawks which I knew had a nest upon the cliff. In less than five minutes after this assault, the eagle again made his appearance, but uttered not a sound, and, having flown to the opposite side of the valley, commenced performing a circle,

in the most graceful manner imaginable. Presently the two hawks also made their appearance high above their rocky home, and proceeded to imitate the movements of the eagle. At first the two parties seemed to be indifferent to each other, but on observing them more closely it was evident that they were gradually approaching each other, and that their several circles were rapidly lessening. On reaching an elevation of perhaps five thousand feet, they finally interfered with each other, and, having joined issue, a regular battle commenced, and as they ascended, the screams of the hawks gradually became inaudible, and in a short time the three royal birds were entirely lost to view in the blue zenith.

Before closing this letter, I wish to inform my readers of a natural curiosity lying between the Clinch and Cumberland Mountains, and distant from this place only about a day's journey. I allude to what is called the Natural Tunnel. It is in Scott county, and consists of a subterranean channel through a ragged limestone hill, the entire bed of which is watered by a running stream about twenty feet wide. The cavern is four hundred and fifty feet long, from sixty to eighty feet in height, about seventy in width, and of a serpentine form. On either side of the hill through which this tunnel passes are perpendicular cliffs, some of which are three hundred feet high and exceedingly picturesque. The gloomy aspect of this tunnel, even at mid-day, is very imposing; for, when standing near the centre, neither of its outlets can be seen, and it requires hardly an effort of the fancy for a man to deem himself for ever entombed within the bowels of the earth.

CHAPTER XXX.

THE CANADIAN RECLUSE.

Of the many singular characters which we have met with in our various travels, we remember none with more pleasure, and even wonder, than the hero of this chapter. In company with three friends, we were upon a fishing cruise along the northern shore of the river St. Lawrence, above the Saguenay, and having on a certain afternoon steered our little craft into a cove at the mouth of a brook, for the purpose of obtaining fresh water, we were surprised to find ourselves in the immediate neighbourhood of a rude but comfortable log cabin. Curiosity, as a matter of course, led us to visit the cabin, and introduce ourselves to the proprietor. We did so, and were not only warmly welcomed, but were invited to tarry with our new acquaintance until the next day, and, had we not accepted the invitation, the following particulars would not now be made public.

The individual under consideration was a Frenchman, and a native of Quebec. He was above the medium height, about forty years of age, graceful in his manners, active in mind and body, and altogether just the character to rivet the attention of the most casual observer. He was wholly ignorant of the world, having never been out of his native city, excepting when he took up his abode in this out-of the-way corner of the country, where, at the time we met with him, he had been secluded for nearly twenty years. He had a wife (but no children,) who was as much like himself in appearance and character as nature could well allow her to be. He was totally illiterate, but possessed an attachment to botany which was truly remarkable. His cabin had only two lower rooms and one garret, and yet the best of

the three was exclusively appropriated to a collection of plants, gathered from the neighbouring hills and mountains, and numbering several hundred varieties, together with large moose horns, furs, and other forest curiosities. He knew not the generic name of a single specimen, and yet he would expatiate upon their beauty in the most interesting manner, showing that he loved them with intense affection. To the discovery and cultivation of plants he told us he was in the habit of devoting more than half of his time, whereupon we asked him from what source he obtained his living. He informed us that, having inherited the large tract of land upon which he resided, he had come here for the purpose of getting a living out of *that*. On casting our eyes about, and finding nothing for them to rest upon but mountains of solid rock, where even pine-trees hardly had the courage to grow, we thought his reply somewhat mysterious. He smiled at our perplexity, and then told us that he had two or three profitable salmon fishing-grounds within a mile of his house, which were rented to Quebec fishermen, and yielded him all the necessaries of life, and that he obtained his fresh meats with his own hands from the forest.

Had we been inclined to doubt any of the assertions of our friend in regard to his good living, all such doubts would have been most assuredly dispelled by what we witnessed and enjoyed before closing our eyes on the night in question. Having taken us to the fishing-ground lying nearest to his cabin, for the purpose of letting us see how the salmon were taken in the circular set nets (into which they swam on their way up stream when the tide was high, and from which they were taken by hundreds when the tide was low,) he picked out a splendid twenty pound fish, and piloted us back again to his dwelling. He then excused himself from further waiting upon us, and begging us to amuse ourselves by *examining his plants*, or doing anything else we pleased, he informed us that he must assist his wife in preparing our supper. We bowed our most willing assent, and as the sun was near setting, we ascended a neighbouring knoll for the purpose of enjoying the extensive prospect which presented itself to view.

We were looking towards the south, and across that portion of the noble St. Lawrence where it is without an island, and its shores are twenty-five miles apart. The retinue of clouds around the setting sun were brilliant to a marvellous degree, and were distinctly mirrored on the tranquil bosom of the superb river. In the distance we could barely discover the southern shore, forming a long narrow line of purple; about a dozen miles to the eastward one solitary ship lay floating, at the mercy of the tide, and in the foreground was the cabin of our entertainer, partly hidden from our view by a few stunted trees, and apparently hemmed in by inaccessible mountains, while before the cabin lay extended some half-dozen immense mongrel dogs, which were the only living creatures, besides ourselves, tending to animate the lonely scene. Silently communing with our own hearts we watched with peculiar interest the coming forth, one after another, of the beautiful stars, and we could not but think of our distant homes, and of the ties which bound us to the absent and loved. One moment more, and we heard a loud halloo, which came from the lungs of our Canadian friend, who informed us that supper was ready, whereupon we descended to the cabin at a pace bordering upon a run.

And such a supper! Our host presided; and while two of his guests were seated on either side, the hostess occupied the opposite end of the table from her husband. She could not speak a word of English, and of course uttered all her apologies in French; and though the husband pretended to talk English, we begged him to remember that his guests all understood French, and that he had better converse as nature dictated. No objections were made, and we proceeded to business. The table was literally loaded; and, whilst the matron poured out a capital cup of coffee, the host overwhelmed the plates of his guests with various kinds of meat, most of which were fried or broiled almost to a crisp. We gave vent to our curiosity by inquiring the names of the dishes we were eating. From this moment, until the truly delicious feast was ended, the talking was all performed by the Canadian botanist, and the substance of his remarks may be stated as follows:—

"That meat, in the blue platter, gentlemen, was cut from the hind-quarters of the biggest *black bear* ever seen among the mountains. He weighed over four hundred pounds, and was as savage as he was fat and big. I was climbing along the edge of a hill, about a week ago, for the purpose of securing a small yellow flower that I had discovered hanging from a rock, when the bear in question came running out of the mouth of his den, and saluting me with a long scratch on the back, I gave him a stab in the belly, and tumbled myself down the offset in the most hasty manner imaginable. I always take my gun with me when I go into the woods, and when I reached the bottom of the hill I looked out for the bear, and, discovering him on a stump some twenty yards off, I gave him a shot, and he made at me with the fires of revenge and rage in his eye. I climbed up a small tree, and while the rascal made an unsuccessful attempt to follow me, I reloaded my gun, and sent another charge directly into his mouth, which gave him a bad cough, and in a short time he staggered a few paces from the tree and fell to the ground quite dead. *I then went back to the cliff to secure my yellow flower*, and during that afternoon, by the aid of my pony, dragged the bear to my cabin.

"In that dish, with a piece broken from the edge, gentlemen, you have a mixture of *moose tongue*, *moose lip*, and *moose brains*. I spent nearly a month moose-hunting last winter, in company with a couple of Indians, and though the snow was deep, the crust hard, our snow-shoes in good order, our dogs brave and strong, and moose were numerous, we only killed about sixteen. I only brought home the heads (while the Indians were satisfied with the skins and haunches;) but I was more than paid for all my trouble, in the way of hard travelling and cold sleeping, for, in one of the moose-yards that we visited, *I found a specimen of pine which I had never seen before*. It was very soft and beautiful, and I think the book-men of England would give a good deal of money if they could have it in their great gardens.

"As to that meat in the white dish, which you all seem to eat with such a relish, I think you will be surprised to learn

that it is nothing but *beaver's tail.* To my taste it is the sweetest meat in the world, and I am only sorry that this valuable animal is becoming so very scarce in this section of country. My present stock of beaver's tail came from the shore of Hudson's Bay, and, though I bought it of an Indian, I had to pay him as much for the tails as the fur company paid him for the skins of his animals. I never trapped for beaver myself, but I have for otter, and often have great sport in killing seals, which are very abundant in the St. Lawrence, and afford to the Indians pretty good food during the hard winters. The only thing that I have against the beaver is, that he has a fashion, I am told, *of cutting down for his house such beautiful trees as the birch, mulberry, willow, and poplar, before they are half grown.*

"As to the salmon upon which you have been feasting, gentlemen, you know as much about that particular individual as I do, since you saw him while yet in his native element. The men who hire my fishing-grounds pay me so much for every fish they take, and sell them at a great profit in Quebec, and even in Montreal. From the fisheries on this shore the people of Canada are exclusively supplied with the salmon, and when we have a good season our merchants manage to send over to the United States, in a smoked condition, a good many thousand. As to taking them with those pretty little flies, which you gentlemen always carry in your pocket-books, I never could understand how you manage to deceive so sensible a fish as the salmon. Of one thing I am certain: if you expect to take any of the salmon in this region with those little lines and hooks, you will be much mistaken. You will have to go down to the Saguenay, where I am told the fish do not know any better than to be deceived by your cunning arts. But if I were ever to follow fishing as you do, i seems to me that instead of red, yellow, and blue feathers, I should cover my hooks *with the bright berries and buds which you may find upon some trees even during the fishing season.*"

This last remark of our host convinced us that he was indeed possessed with a ruling passion, and we of course gratified our-

selves by humouring him to the length of our patience. He not only monopolized the conversation during supper, but he did most of the talking until bed-time. We spent the night under his roof, sleeping upon bear-skins, spread on the floor; and after an early breakfast, we bade him adieu, and pursued our course down the St. Lawrence.

CHAPTER XXXI.

DEATH IN THE WILDERNESS.

MIDWAY between the St. Louis River and Sandy Lake, in the territory of Minesota, is to be found one of the largest and most forbidding of tamarack swamps. From time immemorial it has been a thing of dread, not only to the Indians, but also to the traders and voyagers, for directly across its centre runs the portage train leading from the waters of Lake Superior to those of the Upper Mississippi. For a goodly portion of the year it is blocked up with snow, and during the summer is usually so far covered with water as only occasionally to afford a little island of coarse vegetation. It is so desolate a place as to be uninhabited even by wild animals, and hence the pleasures of travelling over it are far from being manifold. In fact, the only way in which it can be overcome during the vernal months is by employing a rude causeway of logs for the more dangerous places; and as it happens to be directly on the route of a portage over which canoes and packs of furs are annually transported to a considerable extent, we cannot wonder that it should frequently be the scene of mishaps and accidents. We distinctly remember to have seen evidences to prove this, when once crossing the swamp, for all along the trail were the skeletons of canoes, which had been abandoned by their owners, together with broken paddles and remnants of camp furniture. But the most interesting object that we witnessed in this remote corner of the wilderness was a rude wooden cross, surmounting a solitary grave. And connected with this grave is the following story, obtained from one who assisted at the burial.

It was a summer day, and many years ago, when a stranger made his appearance at the Sault St. Marie. He reported

himself as coming from Montreal, and anxious to obtain a canoe passage to the head waters of the Mississippi. He was a Frenchman, of elegant address, and in easy circumstances, so far as one could judge from his stock of travelling comforts. His name and business, however, were alike unknown, and hence a mystery attended him. Having purchased a new canoe and a comfortable tent, he secured the services of four stalwart Chippeways, and started upon his western pilgrimage. He sailed along the southern shore of Lake Superior, and as its unique features developed themselves to his view one after another, he frequently manifested the gratification he experienced in the most enthusiastic manner, thereby increasing the mystery which surrounded him. Wholly unacquainted with the language spoken by his companions, he could only converse with them by signs; but though they could not relate to him the traditions associated with the sandstone cliffs, mountains, and beautiful islands which they witnessed, they did everything in their power to make him comfortable. They entered his tent and built his watch-fire at night, supplied him with game and fish, and, during the long pleasant days, when skimming over the blue waters, entertained him with their romantic but uncouth songs. In due time, they reached the superb and most picturesque St. Louis River, surmounted its waterfalls by means of many portages, entered and ascended one of its tributaries, and finally drew up their canoe at the eastern extremity of the portage leading over the tamarack swamp.

The spot where the voyagers landed was distinguished for its beauty, and as they arrived there in the afternoon, they concluded that a better place could not be found to spend the night. The tent of the stranger was therefore erected, and while the Indians busied themselves in preparing the evening meal, the stranger amused himself by exploring the immediate vicinity of the encampment. He wandered into a neighbouring swamp, for the purpose of obtaining a few roots of the *sweet flag*, of which he was particularly fond, and, on his return to the tent, ate an unreasonable quantity of what he had collected. On that night he was taken sick, and while endeavouring to account for

heart-burning and severe pains that he experienced, he pulled out of his pocket a specimen of the root he had eaten, and handed it to the Indians. They were surprised at this movement, but on examining the root they found it to be a deadly poison, whereupon they managed to inform the stranger that he had made a great mistake, and would probably lose his life. This intelligence was of course received with amazement and horror, and the unhappy man spent a most agonizing night. At day-break he was a little better, and insisted upon immediately continuing his journey. The voyagers obeyed, and packing up their plunder, started across the portage in single file. The excitement which filled the mind of the stranger seemed to give new energy to his sinews, and he travelled for about an hour with great rapidity; but by the time he reached the centre of the tamarack swamp his strength failed him, and he was compelled to call a halt. Upon one of the green islands, already mentioned, the Indians erected his tent, and, with all the blankets and robes belonging to the company, made him as comfortable as possible. The hours of the day were nearly numbered; the stranger had endured the severest agony, and he knew that he was about to die! He divested himself of his clothes, and, with all his papers and other personal property, motioned that they should be placed in a heap a few paces from the door of his tent. His request was obeyed. He then handed them all the money he had, and despatched all his attendants upon imaginary errands into the neighbouring woods, and when they returned they found the heap of clothes and other property changed into heaps of ashes. They supposed the sick man had lost his reason, and therefore did not deem his conduct inexplicable. They only increased their kind attentions, for they felt that the stream of life was almost dry. Again did the stranger summon the Indians to his side, and pulling from his breast a small silver crucifix, motioned to them that they should plant upon his grave a similar memento; and hiding it again in the folds of his shirt, cast a lingering and agonizing look upon the setting sun, and in this manner breathed his last.

By the light of the moon the Indians dug a grave on the

spot where the stranger died, into which they deposited his remains, with the crucifix upon his breast. At the head of the grave, they planted a rude cross made of the knotty tamarack wood, and after a night of troubled repose, started upon their return to the Sault St. Marie, where they finally recounted the catastrophe of their pilgrimage. And such is the story that we heard of the lonely cross in the northern wilderness surmounting the remains of the nameless exile.

CHAPTER XXXII.

RATTLESNAKES.

We believe that we have seen a greater number of these reptiles, in our various journeyings, and been more intensely frightened by them, than any other scenery-loving tourist or angler in the country, and hence the idea of our present essay. We shall record our stock of information for the benefit of the general reader, rather than for the learned and scientific, beginning our remarks with what we know of the character of that really beautiful and magnanimous, but most deadly animal, which was adopted as the revolutionary emblem of our country, as the eagle is now the emblem of the republic.

The rattlesnake derives its name from an instrument attached to its tail, consisting of a series of hollow scaly pieces, which, when shaken, make a rattling or rustling noise. The number of these pieces or rattles are said to correspond with the number of years which the animal has attained, and some travellers assert that they have been discovered with thirty rattles, though thirteen is a much more common number. It is one of the most venomous of serpents, and yet one that we cannot but respect, since it habitually makes the most honourable use of the singular appendage with which it is gifted. It never strikes a foe without first warning him of his danger. In form, it is somewhat corpulent, has a flat heart-shaped head, and is supplied with fangs, varying from a half-inch to an inch in length, which lie hidden horizontally in the flesh of the upper jaw, and are capable of being thrown out like the blade of a knife. The venom emitted by it is so deadly that it has been known to cause the death of a human being in a very few hours, and to destroy a dog or cat in less than twenty minutes, and yet we have met with some half-

dozen individuals in our travels who have been bitten by the rattlesnake without being seriously injured. Horses and cattle are known to become exceedingly terrified at its appearance, and generally speaking, when bitten, die in a short time, and yet we once saw a horse which was only troubled, in consequence of its bite, by a disease resembling the scurvy. The hair dropped from the skin of the quadruped, and he looked extremely ill, if he did not feel so. As to the effect of this poison upon hogs, it has frequently been proved to be perfectly harmless, and we know it to be the custom in certain portions of the country for farmers to employ their swine for the express purpose of destroying the rattlesnakes infesting their land. The effect of the rattlesnake's bite upon itself is said to be generally fatal. In regard to the antidote to this poison, we are acquainted with only one, which is the plant commonly called the rattlesnake weed. Both the leaf and the root are employed, and applied internally as well as externally. This plant grows to the height of six or eight inches, has one stock, and a leaf resembling in shape the head of the rattlesnake, and is almost invariably found in those sections of the country where the reptile abounds.

The courage of the rattlesnake is by no means remarkable, and it is but seldom that they will dispute the right of way with a man who is not afraid of them. They are sluggish in their movements, and accomplish most of their travelling during the nocturnal hours. They feed upon almost every variety of living creatures which they can overpower. They are not partial to water, but when compelled to cross a river or lake, they perform the feat in a most beautiful manner, holding their heads about one foot from the surface and gliding along at a rapid rate. They are affectionate creatures, and it is alleged that when their offspring are very young, and they are disturbed by the presence of man, the mothers swallow their little ones until the danger is past, and then disgorge them alive and writhing.

Another of their peculiarities consists in the fact, that they may be entirely disarmed by brandishing over their heads the leaves of the white ash, which are so obnoxious to their nervous system as to produce the most painful contortions of the body.

When travelling at night in search of food, or for purposes of recreation, as it may be, they have a fashion of visiting the encampments of hunters, and it has been ascertained that the only way of keeping them at a respectable distance is to encircle the camp with a rope, over which they are afraid to crawl; and it has frequently happened to hunters, in a snake country, that on awaking after a night of repose, they have discovered on the outside of their magic circle as many as a dozen of the charming creatures, carefully coiled up and sound asleep. It is also related of this snake that it has the power of throwing off or suppressing a disagreeable effluvium, which is quite sickening to those who come within its range. If this be true, it occurs chiefly in the month of August, when the weather is sultry and the snake is particularly fat. That this snake has the power of *charming,* as some writers maintain, may be true, but we are not aware of an authenticated instance. That it may have a very quiet way of stealing upon its prey seems to us much more plausible; but we will not commit ourselves by declaring this to be a fact. As to their power of *hissing*—that also is an undecided question. In regard to their manner of biting we can speak with more confidence. They never attack a man without first coiling themselves in a graceful manner, and, instead of jumping, they merely extend their bodies, with the quickness of thought, towards their mark, and if they do not reach it, they have to coil themselves again for a second effort, and when they hit a man at all, it is generally on his heel—for the bruising of which they have the authority of the Scriptures.

The rattlesnake is peculiar to the American continent. Four varieties alone are known to naturalists, three of which are found in the United States, and one in South America. In the states bordering on the Gulf of Mexico they attain the length of seven and eight feet, and a diameter of three to four inches—the males having four fangs, and the females only two. These are characterized by a kind of diamond figure on the skin, and are partial to the low or bottom lands of the country. Those found in the Middle and Northern States are called the common or banded rattlesnakes, and are altogether the most abundant in the

Union. They vary in length from two and a half to four feet, and are partial to mountainous and rocky districts. There is also a very small, but most dangerous variety, called the ground rattlesnakes, which are found on the sterile and sandy prairies of the West, and, to a limited extent, in the barren districts of the South. In Canada they are almost unknown, and even in the more thickly settled states of the Union they are rapidly becoming extinct. As to their value, it may be stated that their oil and gall are highly prized in some sections of the Union for the cure of consumption, and it is said that their bodies when dried by fire and pulverized, and then infused in brandy, are a certain cure for rheumatism. By the Indians and slave population of the South, their flesh is frequently employed as an article of food, and really considered sweet and nourishing.

The attachment of the aborigines to this famous reptile is proverbial: among nearly all the tribes, even at the present day, it is seldom disturbed, but is designated by the endearing epithet of *grandfather*. It is recorded, however, by the early historians, that when one tribe desired to challenge another to combat, they were in the habit of sending into the midst of their enemy the skin of a rattlesnake, whereby it would appear to have been employed as an emblem of revenge. And as to the origin of the rattlesnake, the old men among the Cherokees relate a legend to the following effect, which, the reader will notice, bears a striking analogy to the history of our Saviour. A very beautiful young man, with a white face and wrapped in a white robe, once made his appearance in their nation, and commanded them to abandon all their old customs and festivals, and to adopt a new religion. He made use of the softest language, and everything that he did proved him to be a good man. It so happened, however, that he could make no friends among them, and the medicine men of the nation conspired to take away his life. In many ways did they try to do this—by lashing him with serpents and by giving him poison, but were always unsuccessful. But in process of time the deed was accomplished, and in the following manner: It was known that the good stranger was in the habit of daily visiting a certain spring for the purpose of quenching his thirst, and

bathing his body. In view of this fact, the magicians made a very beautiful war-club, inlaid with bone and shells, and decorated with rattles, and this club they offered to the Great Spirit, with the prayer that he would teach them how to destroy the stranger. In answer to the prayer, a venomous snake was created and carefully hidden under a leaf by the side of the spring. The stranger, as usual, came there to drink, was bitten by the snake and perished. The Cherokee nation then fell in love with the snake, and having asked the Great Spirit to distinguish it, by some peculiar mark, from all the other snakes in the world, he complied by transferring to its body the rattles which had made the club of sacrifice so musical to the ear, and so beautiful to the eye. And from that rattlesnake are descended all the poisonous snakes now scattered through the world.

We commenced this article with the determination of not writing a single paragraph (for the above legend, after a fashion, is historical) which could be classed with the unbelievable things called "Snake Stories," but the following matter-of-fact, though disconnected anecdotes, may not be unacceptable to our readers.

We were once upon a fishing expedition among the mountains of North Carolina, with two other gentlemen, when it so happened that we determined to spend the night in a deserted log cabin, belonging to one of the party. By the light of a large fire, we partook of a cold but comfortable supper, and after talking ourselves into a drowsy mood, we huddled together on the floor, directly in front of the fire-place, and were soon in a sound sleep. About midnight, when the fire was out, one of the party was awakened by a singular rattling noise, and having roused his companions, it was ascertained beyond a doubt that there were two rattlesnakes within the room where they were lying. We arose, of course, horrified at the idea, and as we were in total darkness, we were afraid even to move for fear of being bitten. We soon managed, however, to strike a light, and when we did so, we found one of our visitors on the hearth, and one in the remotest corner of the room. We killed them, as a matter of course, with a most hearty relish, and in the morning destroyed another of the same race, just without the threshold of the cabin.

The reptiles had probably left the cabin just before our arrival, and on returning at midnight, had expressed their displeasure at our intrusion upon their abode, by sounding their rattles.

On another occasion we were of a party of anglers who killed a rattlesnake on one of the mountains overlooking Lake George (where this reptile is very abundant,) and, after its head had been cut off and buried, one of the party affirmed that there was not a person present who could take the dead snake in his hand, hold it out at arm's length, and give it a sudden squeeze, without dropping it to the ground. A wager was offered, and by the most curious and courageous of the party was accepted. He took the snake in his hand and obeyed the instructions, when the serpentine body suddenly sprang as if endowed with life, and the headless trunk struck the person holding it with considerable force upon the arm. To add that the snake fell to the ground most suddenly is hardly necessary. We enjoyed a laugh at the expense of our ambitious friend, for the phenomenon which he made known may be easily explained: However, since that time we have been led to believe that there is not one man in a thousand who would have the fortitude to succeed in the experiment above mentioned.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

SALMON FISHING.

I like the society of fish, and as they cannot with any convenience to themselves visit me on dry land, it becomes me in point of courtesy to pay my respects to them in their own element.—WILLIAM SCROPE.

OF the genuine salmon, we believe there is but one distinct species in the world; we are sure there is not in the United States. From its lithe beauty, its wonderful activity, and its value as an article of food, it unquestionably takes precedence of all the fish which swim in our waters.

The variety of which we speak is a slender fish, particularly solid in texture, and has a small head and delicate fins. The upper jaw is the larger, while the tip of the under jaw in the female has an upward turn. The back is usually of a bluish colour, the sides of a silvery hue, and the belly pure white, while along the centre of its body runs a narrow black stripe. The scales are small, and the mouth is covered with small, but stout and pointed teeth. A few dark spots are dispersed over that part of the body above the lateral line, and the females usually exhibit a larger number of these spots than the males. The tail of the young salmon is commonly forked, while in the adult fish it is quite square. To speak of the salmon as a bold biter and a handsome fish, or of his wonderful leaping powers, would be but to repeat a thrice-told tale.

And now for a few words on some of the habits of the salmon. He is unquestionably the most active of all the finny tribes, but the wonderful leaps which he is reported to have made are all moonshine. We have seen them perform some superb somersets, but we never yet saw one which could scale a perpendicular

waterfall of ten feet. That they have been taken above waterfalls three or four times as high we do not deny; but the wonder may be dispensed with, when we remember that a waterfall seldom occurs, which does not contain a number of resting-places for the salmon to take advantage of while on his upward journey.

Contrary to the prevailing opinion, we contend that the salmon is possessed of a short memory. While fishing in a small river on a certain occasion, owing to the bad position in which we were placed, we lost a favourite fly, and it so happened that in about one hour afterwards a fish was taken by a brother angler, in whose mouth was found the identical fly that we had lost.*

This fish is a voracious feeder, and an epicure in his tastes, for his food is composed principally of small and delicate fish, and the sea-sand eel; but it is a fact that the *surest* bait to capture him with is the common red worm.

The salmon is a shy fish, and as he invariably inhabits the clearest of water, it is always important that the angler's movements should be particularly cautious; and in throwing the fly, he should throw it clear across the stream, if possible; and after letting it float down for a few yards he should gradually draw it back again, with an upward tendency.

Like all other fish that swim near the surface of the water, the salmon cannot be eaten in too fresh a condition; and, judging from our own experience, they may be eaten three times a-day, for a whole season, and at the end of their running time they will gratify the palate more effectually than when first brought upon the table.

The process of spawning has been described by various writers, and the general conclusion is as follows. On reaching a suitable spot for that purpose, the loving pair manage to dig a furrow some six feet long, in the sand or gravel, into which the male ejects his milt, and the female her spawn; this they cover with their tails, and leaving this deposit to the tender mercies of the liquid elements, betake themselves to the sea whence they came. This spawning operation usually occupies about ten days, and takes place in the autumn; and when the spring-time comes the

* This is by no means an uncommon circumstance.—*Ed.*

salmon are born, and, under "their Creator's protection," are swept into the sea, where they come to their natural estate by the following spring, and ascend their native rivers to revisit the haunts of their minnowhood. And it is a singular fact, that the salmon leaves the sea in an emaciated condition, acquires his fatness while going up a river, and subsequently returns to the sea for the purpose of recruiting his wonted health and beauty.*

The salmon is a restless fish, and seldom found a second time in exactly the same spot; but his principal travelling time is in the night, when the stars are shining brightly and all the world is wrapt in silence.

The salmon come up from the sea during a flood or a freshet, and in ascending a river, they invariably tarry for a short time in all the pools of the same. Their object in doing this has not been clearly defined; but is it unreasonable to suppose that they are influenced by the same motives which induce a human traveller to tarry in a pleasant valley? The only difference is, that when the man would resume his journey he waits for a sunny day, while the salmon prefers a rainy day to start upon his pilgrimage. The best places to fish for salmon are the shallows above the deep pools; and it is a settled fact, that after you have killed a fish, you are always sure to find in the course of a few hours another individual in the same place. It would thus seem that they are partial to certain localities. Another thing that should be remembered is, that salmon never take the natural fly while it is in a stationary position, or when floating down stream; hence the great importance of carrying the artificial fly directly across the stream, or in an upward oblique direction. When you have hooked a salmon, it is a bad plan to strain upon him in any degree, unless he is swimming towards a dangerous ground, and even then this is an unsafe experiment. The better plan is to throw a pebble in front of him, for the purpose of frightening him back, and you should manage to keep as near his royal person as practicable. Another peculiarity of the salmon is the fact that (excepting the shad) it is the only fish which seems to be

* The propagation of salmon at Galway and elsewhere by artificial means, which is now carried on most successfully, will throw much light on the habits of this fish.—*Ed.*

perfectly at home in the salt sea, as well as in the fresh springs among the mountains. It is also singular in the colour of its flesh, which is a deep pink, and the texture of its flesh is remarkably solid: the latter circumstance is proved by the fact that you cannot carry a salmon by the gills, as you can other fish, without tearing and mutilating him to an uncommon degree.

In olden times there was hardly a river on the eastern coast of the United States, north of Virginia, which was not annually visited by the salmon; but those days are for ever departed, and it is but seldom that we now hear of their being taken in any river south of Boston. They frequented, in considerable numbers, the Susquehanna, the Delaware, and North rivers, but were eminently abundant in the Connecticut and the Thames. On the former stream it used to be stipulated by the day-labourer, that he should have salmon placed upon his table only four times in the week; and we have been told by an old man residing on the latter stream, that the value of three salmon, forty years ago, was equal to one shad—the former were so much more abundant than the latter. But steamboats and the din of cities, have long since frightened the salmon from their ancient haunts, and the beautiful aborigines of our rivers now seek for undisturbed homes in more northern waters. Occasionally even at the present time, the shad fishermen of the Merrimac and Saco succeed in netting a small salmon; but in the Androscoggin, Kennebec, and Penobscot, they are yet somewhat abundant, and these are the rivers which chiefly supply our city markets with the fresh article.

As the ice melts away in the spring, says Dr. J. V. C. Smith, in his interesting little book on the Fishes of Massachusetts, they rush to the rivers from the ocean; and it is an undeniable fact, confirmed by successful experiments, that they visit, as far as possible, the very streams in which they were born. When undisturbed, they swim slowly in large schools near the surface; yet they are so timid, that if suddenly frightened, the whole column will turn directly back towards the sea. Is has also been proven that a salmon can scud at the surprising velocity of thirty miles an hour. The young are about a foot long when they visit the

rivers for the first time; and at the end of two years, according to Mr. Smith, they weigh five or six pounds, and attain their full growth in about six years. When running up the rivers they are in a fat condition; after that period, having deposited their spawn, they return to the sea, lean and emaciated. In extremely warm weather, and while yet in the salt water, they are often greatly annoyed by a black and flat-looking insect, which is apt to endanger their lives. As soon, however, as they reach the fresh water, this insect drops off, and they rapidly improve.

The streams which these fish ascend are invariably distinguished for their rocky and gravelly bottoms, for the coldness and purity of their water, and for their rapid currents. Those which afford the angler the most sport are rather small and shallow, and empty into tide-water rivers; while in these they are chiefly taken with the net. The tributaries of the Androscoggin, Kennebec, and Penobscot, having all been blocked up with mill-dams, the salmon is only found in the principal estuaries; and as these are large and deep, they are of no value to the angler, and will not be many years longer even to the fishermen who capture them for the purpose of making money. So far as our own experience goes, we only know of one river, within the limits of the Union, which affords the angler good salmon fishing, and that is the Aroostook, in Maine. We have been informed, however, that the regular salmon is taken in many of those rivers, in the northern part of New York, which empty into Lake Ontario, and the upper St. Lawrence, but we are compelled to doubt the truth of the statement. Such may have been the case in former times, but we think it is not so now. Salmon are not taken at Montreal, and it is therefore unreasonable to suppose that they ever reach the fountain-head of the St. Lawrence; this portion of the great river is too far from the ocean, and too extensively navigated, and the water is not sufficiently clear. That they once ascended to the Ottawa river and Lake Ontario we have not a doubt, but those were in the times of the days of old. Another prevailing opinion with regard to salmon we have it in our power decidedly to contradict. Mr. John J. Brown, in his useful little book entitled the "American Angler's Guide,"

makes the remark, that salmon are found in great abundance in the Mississippi and its magnificent tributaries. Such is not the fact, and we are sure that if "our brother" had ever caught a glimpse of the muddy Mississippi, he would have known by intuition that such *could* not be the case. Nor is the salmon partial to any of the rivers of the far South, as many people suppose, not being known in any river emptying into the Gulf of Mexico; so that the conclusion of the whole matter is just this, that the salmon fisheries of the United States proper are of but little consequence when compared with many other countries on the globe. When we come to speak of our territories, however, we have a very different story to relate, for a finer river for salmon does not water any country than the mighty Columbia —that same Columbia where a certain navigator once purchased a ton of salmon for a jack-knife. But that river is somewhat too far off to expect an introduction in our present essay, and we will therefore take our reader, by his permission, into the neighbouring provinces of Canada, New Brunswick, and Nova Scotia.

Before proceeding another step, however, we must insert a paragraph about the various methods employed to capture the salmon. The Indians, and many white barbarians, spear them by torchlight; and the thousands sent to market in a smoked condition are taken in nets and seines of various kinds. But the only instruments used by the scientific angler are a rod and reel, three hundred feet of hair or silk line, and an assortment of artificial flies. Our books tell us that a gaudy fly is commonly the best killer, but our own experience inclines us to the belief that a large brown or black hackle, or any neatly made grey fly, is much preferable to the finest fancy specimens. As to bait-fishing for salmon, we have never tried it—we care less about it than we know, and we know but very little. Next to a delicately made fly, the most important thing to consider is the leader of the line, which should be made of the best material (a twisted gut,) and at least five feet in length. But if the angler is afraid of wading in a cold and even a deep stream, the very best of tackle will avail him nothing. It is but seldom that a large

salmon can be taken, without costing the captor a good deal of hard labour, and a number of duckings. And when the character of the fish is remembered, this assertion will not appear strange. Not only is the salmon a large fish, but he is remarkable for his strength and lightning quickness. Owing to his extreme carefulness in meddling with matters that may injure him, it is necessary to use the most delicate tackle, in the most cautious and expert manner. To pull a salmon in shore, immediately after he has been hooked, will never do; the expert way is to give him all the line he wants, never forgetting in the meantime that it must be kept perfectly taut. And this must be done continually, in spite of every obstacle, not only when the fish performs his splendid leaps out of the water, but also when he is stemming the current of the stream, trying to break the hook against a rock, or when he has made a sudden wheel, and is gliding down the stream with the swiftness of a falling star. The last effort to get away which I have mentioned, is usually the last that the salmon makes, and it is therefore of the highest importance that the angler should manage him correctly when going down. Narrow rifts, and even waterfalls, do not stop the salmon; and bushes, deep holes, slippery bottoms, and rocky shores, must not impede the course of the angler who would secure a p i. e. And though the salmon is a powerful fish, he is not long-winded, and by his great impatience is apt to drown himself much sooner than one would suppose. The times most favourable for taking this fish are early in the morning and late in the afternoon; and when the angler reaches his fishing ground and discovers the salmon leaping out of the water, as if too happy to remain quiet, he may then calculate upon rare sport. As to the pleasure of capturing a fine salmon, we conceive it to be more exquisite than any other sport in the world. We have killed a buffalo on the head waters of the St. Peter's river, but we had every advantage over the pursued, for we rode a well-trained horse and carried a double-barrelled gun. We have seen John Cheney bring to the earth a mighty bull moose, among the Adirondac mountains, but he was assisted by a pair of terrible dogs, and carried a heavy rifle. But neither of these exploits is to be

compared with that of capturing a twenty pound salmon, with a line almost as fine as the flowing hair of a beautiful woman. When we offer a fly to a salmon, we take no undue advantage of him, but allow him to follow his own free will; and when he has hooked himself, we give him permission to match his strength against our skill. We have sat in a cariole and driven a Canadian pacer at the rate of a mile in two minutes and a half, on the icy plains of Lake Erie, and, as we held the reins, have thought we could not enjoy a more exquisite pleasure. That experience, however, was ours long before we had ever seen a genuine salmon; we are somewhat wiser now, for we have acquired the art of driving through the pure white foam even a superb salmon, and that, too, with only a silken line some hundred yards in length.

One of the most fruitful salmon regions for the angler to visit lies on the north shore of the Gulf of St. Lawrence, between the Saguenay and the Godbout river, in Labrador. A few years ago, however, there was good fishing to be had in Mal Bay river, above the Saguenay, and also in the Jacques Cartier, above Quebec, but good sport is seldom found in either of those streams at the present time. But the principal tributaries of the Saguenay itself (particularly the river St. Margaret,) afford the rarest of sport, even now. The streams of this coast are rather small, but very numerous, and without a single exception, we believe, are rapid, cold, and clear. They abound in waterfalls, and though exceedingly wild, are usually quite convenient to angle in, for the reason that the spring freshets are apt to leave a gravelly margin on either side. The conveniences for getting to this out-of-the-way region are somewhat rude, but quite comfortable and very romantic. The angler has to go in a Quebec fishing smack, or if he is in the habit of trusting to fortune when he gets into a scrape, he can always obtain a passage down the St. Lawrence in a brig or ship, which will land him at any stated point. If he goes in a smack, he can always make use of her tiny cabin for his temporary home; but if he takes a ship, after she has spread her sails for Europe, he will have to depend upon the hospitality of the Esquimaux Indians. At the mouths of a few of the streams alluded to, he may chance to find the newly-built cabin of a lum-

berman, who will treat him with marked politeness; but he must not lay the "flattering unction" to his soul that he will receive any civilities from the agents of the Hudson's Bay Company whom he may happen to meet in that northern wilderness.

A large proportion of these streams run through an unknown mountain land, and are yet nameless; so that we cannot designate the precise localities where we have been particularly successful; and we might add that the few which have been named by the Jesuit missionaries can never be remembered without a feeling of disgust. Not to attempt a puff, it can safely be remarked that those names are decidedly *beastly;* for they celebrate such creatures as the hog, the sheep, and the cow. The salmon taken on this coast vary from ten to forty pounds, though the average weight is perhaps fifteen pounds. They constitute an important article of commerce, and it is sometimes the case that a single fisherman will secure at least four hundred at one tide, in a single net. The cities of Montreal and Quebec are supplied with fresh salmon from this portion of the St. Lawrence, and the entire valley of that river, as well as portions of the Union, are supplied with smoked salmon from the same region. The rivers on the southern coast of the Gulf of St. Lawrence are generally well supplied with salmon, but those streams are few and far between, and difficult of access. But a visit to any portion of this great northern valley, during the pleasant summer time, is attended with many interesting circumstances. Generally speaking, the scenery is mountainous, and though the people are not very numerous, they are somewhat unique in their manners and customs, and always take pleasure in lavishing their attentions upon the stranger. The weeks that we spent voyaging upon the St. Lawrence we always remember with unalloyed pleasure; and if we thought that fortune would never again permit us to revisit those delightful scenes, we should indeed be quite unhappy.

The most agreeable of our pilgrimages were performed in a small sail-boat, commanded by an experienced and very intelligent pilot of Tadousac, named Oavington, and our companions were Charles Pentland, Esq., of L'anse a-l'eau, on the Saguenay, and David Price, Esq., of Quebec. We had every thing we wanted

in the way of "creature comforts;" and we went every where, saw every body, caught lots of salmon, killed an occasional seal, and tried to harpoon an occasional white porpoise; now enjoying a glorious sunset, and then watching the stars and the strange auroras, as we lay becalmed at midnight far out upon the deep; at one time gazing with wonder upon a terrible storm, and then again, happy, fearless, and free, dashing over the billows before a stiff gale.

Some of the peculiar charms of fly-fishing in this region are owing to the fact, that you are not always sure of the genus of your fish even after you have hooked him, for it may be a forty or a twenty pound salmon, and then again it may be a salmon-trout or a four pound specimen of the common trout. The consequence is, that the expectations of the angler are always particularly excited. Another pleasure which might be mentioned is derived from the queer antics and laughable yells of the Indians, who are always hanging about your skirts for the express purpose of making themselves merry over any mishap which may befall you. The only drawback which we have found in fishing in these waters is caused by the immense number of musquitoes and sand-flies. Every new guest is received by them with particular and constant attention: their only desire, by night or day, seems to be to gorge themselves to death with the life-blood of those who "happen among them." It actually makes our blood run cold to think of the misery we endured from these winged tormentors.

Even with the Gulf of St. Lawrence before our mind, we are disposed to consider the Bay of Chaleur the most interesting salmon region in the British possessions. This estuary divides Lower Canada from New Brunswick, and as the streams emptying into it are numerous and always clear, they are resorted to by the salmon in great numbers. The scenery of the bay is remarkably beautiful, the northern shore being rugged and mountainous, presents an agreeable contrast to the southern shore, which is an extensive lowland, fertile, and somewhat cultivated. The principal inhabitants of this region are Scotch farmers, and the simplicity of their lives is only equalled by their hospitality; and

upon this bay, also, reside the few survivors of a once powerful aboriginal nation, the Micmac Indians. But of all the rivers which empty into the Bay of Chaleur, there is not one that can be compared to the Restigouche, which is its principal tributary. It is a winding stream, unequal in width, and after running through a hilly country, it forces its way through a superb mountain gorge, and then begins to expand in width until it falls into its parent bay. The scenery is most beautiful, the eye being occasionally refreshed by the appearance of a neat farm, or a little Indian hamlet. The river is particularly famous for its salmon, which are very abundant and of a good size. But this is a region which the anglers of our country or the provinces, with two or three exceptions, have not yet taken the trouble to visit, and many of the resident inhabitants are not even aware of the fact that the salmon may be taken with the fly. The regular fishermen catch them altogether with the net, and the Indians with the spear; and it is a singular fact that the Indians are already complaining of the whites for destroying their fisheries, when it is known that a single individual will frequently capture in a single day a hundred splendid fellows, and that, too, with a spear of only one tine. It is reported of a Scotch clergyman who once angled in "these parts," that he killed three hundred salmon in one season, and with a single rod and reel. A pilgrimage to the Restigouche would afford the salmon fisher sufficient material to keep his memory busy for at least one year. The angler and lover of scenery who could spare a couple of months, would find it a glorious trip to go to the Bay of Chaleur in a vessel around Nova Scotia, returning in a canoe by the Restigouche and the Salmon river, which empties into the St. John. His most tedious portage would be only about three miles long (a mere nothing to the genuine angler,) and soon after touching the latter river he could ship himself on board of a steamboat, and come home in less than a week, even if that home happened to be west of the Alleghany mountains. The Nepisiguit and the Miramichi, as I am told, are also glorious streams for the salmon fisher.

Of all the large rivers, indeed, of New Brunswick, we know not

a single one which will not afford the fly fisherman an abundance of sport. Foremost among our favourites, we would mention the St. John, with the numerous beautiful tributaries which come into it below the Great Falls, not forgetting the magnificent pool below those falls, nor Salmon river, the Tobique and the Aroostook. The scenery of this valley is truly charming, but the man who would spend a summer therein must have a remarkably long purse, for the half-civilized and white people of the region have a particular passion for imposing upon travellers, and charging them the most exorbitant prices for the simple necessaries they may need. The salmon of the St. John are numerous, but rather small, seldom weighing more than fifteen pounds. The fisheries of the bay of Fundy, near the mouth of the St. John, constitute an important interest, in a commercial point of view. The fishermen here take the salmon with drag-nets, just before high water; the nets are about sixty fathoms long, and require three or four boats to manage them. The fish are all purchased at this particular point, by one man, at the rate of eighty cents a-piece, large and small, during the entire season. The other New Brunswick rivers to which we have alluded, are the Miramichi and the St. Croix; but as we have never angled in either, we will leave them to their several reputations.

We now come to say a few words of Nova Scotia, which is not only famous for its salmon, but also for its scientific anglers. In this province the old English feeling for the "gentle art" is kept up, and we know of fly fishermen there, a record of whose piscatorial exploits would have overwhelmed even the renowned Walton and Davy with astonishment. The rivers of Nova Scotia are very numerous, and usually well supplied with salmon. The great favourite among the Halifax anglers is Gold river, a cold and beautiful stream, which is about sixty miles distant from that city, in a westerly direction. The valley of the stream is somewhat settled, and by a frugal and hard-working Swiss and German population, who pitched their tents there in 1760. It is fifteen years since it was discovered by a strolling angler, and at the present time there is hardly a man residing on its banks who does not consider himself a faithful disciple of Walton. Even

among the Micmac Indians, who pay the river an annual visit, may be occasionally found an expert fly fisher. But, after all, Nova Scotia is not exactly the province to which a Yankee angler would enjoy a visit, for cockney fishermen are a little too abundant, and the ways of the people, in some particulars, are not over agreeable.

Having finished our geographical history of the salmon and his American haunts, we will take our leave of him, by simply remarking (for the benefit of those who like to preserve what they capture) that there are three modes for preserving salmon:—first, by putting them in salt for three days, and then smoking, which takes about twelve days; secondly, by regularly salting them down, as you would mackerel; and thirdly, by boiling and then pickling them in vinegar. The latter method is unquestionably the most troublesome, but at the same time the most expeditious; and what can tickle the palate more exquisitely than a choice bit of pickled salmon, with a bottle of Burgundy to float it to its legitimate home?

CHAPTER XXXIV.

TROUT-FISHING.

It carries us into the most wild and beautiful scenery of nature; amongst the mountain lakes and the clear and lovely streams that gush from the higher ranges of elevated hills, or make their way through the cavities of calcareous rocks.

SIR HUMPHREY DAVY.

WERE it not for the salmon, we should pronounce the trout the most superb game-fish in the world. As the case now stands, however, we are inclined to believe that he has delighted a greater number of anglers than any other inhabitant of the "liquid plain." The characteristics of this charming fish are so well known that we shall not, on this occasion, enter upon a scientific description either of his person or habits. In all the particulars of beauty, of colour and form, of grace, of activity, of intelligence and flavour, as before intimated, he has but one rival. He always glories in the coldest and purest of water, and the regions of country to which he is partial are commonly distinguished for the wildness of their scenery; and therefore it is that to the lover of nature this imperial fish has ever been exceedingly dear. Their period of spawning is in the autumn, and they recover as early as February, thereby remaining in season a part of the winter, as well as the entire spring and summer—though the trouting months, *par excellence*, are May and June.

In weight, even when fully grown, the different varieties of trout run from four ounces to sixty pounds, and of the different distinct species found in the United States and Canada, we are acquainted only with the following:—

The Common, or Brook and River Trout.—There is hardly a cold and rocky stream in any of the New England or Northern

States, or among the mountains of the Middle and Southern States, where this species is not found in abundance. In regard to weight, they ordinarily vary from three or four ounces to two pounds; and in colour, according to the character of the brook or river which they inhabit. So apparent is the difference of colour in this family, that, in the several sections of the country where they are found, they are designated by the names of silver or fall trout, as in Lake George; and the black trout, as in many of the smaller lakes or ponds of New England. The only *civilized* mode employed by our people for taking them is with the hook; but, while the scientific angler prefers the artificial fly (with an appropriate reel,) large numbers are annually destroyed by the farmers' boys with the common hook and red worm. As to the heathenish mode of netting this beautiful fish, we can only say that it merits the most earnest condemnation of every gentleman. The common trout is proverbially one of the most skittish of all the finny tribes; but when he happens to be a little hungry, he is fearless as the hawk, and at such times often leaps into the air as if for the purpose of defying the cunning of his human enemies. According to our experience, the best bait for early spring fishing is the common worm; but for June, July, and August, we prefer the fly. Sometimes, however, a minnow is preferable to either. The great charm of fly fishing for trout is derived from the fact that you then see the movement of your fish, and if you are not an expert hand, the chances are that you will capture but one out of the hundred that may rise to your hook. You can seldom save a trout unless you strike the very instant that he leaps. But, even after this, a deal of care is required to land him in safety. If he is a half-pounder, you may pull him out directly; but if larger than that, after fairly hooking him, you should play him with your whole line, which, when well done, is a feat full of poetry. The swiftness with which a trout can dart from his hiding-place after a fly is truly astonishing; and we never see one perform this operation without feeling an indescribable thrill quivering through our frame. The fact that this is the only fish in the world which nature has designated by a row of scarlet spots along the sides, would seem to imply that she deemed it the per-

fection of her finny creations, and had, therefore, fixed upon it this distinguishing mark of her skill.

The Salmon Trout.—Under this head we include all those fish of the trout genus which are found only in those lakes of our country having no connection whatever with the sea. The fish now under consideration resembles, in its general appearance, the legitimate salmon, but is totally unlike it in several particulars. The salmon trout, for example, varies in weight from three to sixty pounds; and if every body is to be believed, they have been taken in some of our waters weighing upwards of one hundred pounds. They are of much less value than the real salmon as an article of food, there being nothing at all delicate in the texture or flavour of a mammoth fish. As sporting fish, too, they are of little value, for they love the gloom of deep water, and are not distinguished for their activity. The names, besides its own, by which this fish is recognized, are the lake trout and the Mackinaw trout; and, by many people who ought to know better, they are often confounded with the genuine salmon. As is the case with the salmon, they are seldom or never found in any of our rivers, but chiefly in the lakes of the northern and northwestern States of the Union, being found in the greatest numbers at the Straits of Mackinaw, in Lake Superior, Lake George, and the other lakes of the Empire State, and in Moosehead Lake.

The Sea Trout.—Our idea of this fish is that it is quite at home in the "deep, deep sea," but rather partial to the brackish waters of large rivers and the inland bays of the American coast. And also that they vary in weight from three to fifteen pounds, and ought to be highly prized as a game-fish, their flesh being of a rosy hue, and excellent, and their courage and strength allied to those of their more aristocratic cousin—the salmon. Like the salmon and common trout, too, they scorn the more common baits of the fisherman, and possess a decided taste for the fly, albeit thousands of them are taken with the shrimp and minnow. The waters where they mostly abound are those of the lower St. Lawrence and its tributaries, the bay of Cape Cod, all along the southern shore of Barnstable, the entire shore of Martha's Vineyard, and the bays Delaware and Chesapeake. So much

for the varieties of trout with which we are personally acquainted.

It now behoves us to record some of our experience in trout fishing, but we have already published in our books of travel, and elsewhere, quite as many *fish stories* as will be readily believed. We shall, therefore, content ourselves, on this occasion, with a brief description of our favourite localities.

As a matter of course, the first place that we mention in this connection is Sault St. Marie, which, for many reasons, is an exceedingly attractive place. In the first place, it is the outlet to Lake Superior, the largest body of fresh water on the globe. It is also the western terminating point of the lake navigation of the north. From the earliest periods of our history to the present time, it has been, as it were, the starting-place for all the fur expeditions by land which have ever penetrated the immense wilderness bordering on Hudson's Bay and the Arctic ocean. The fall of the river St. Marie at the spot called the Sault, is nearly twenty-five feet within the space of half a mile, so that from a canoe at the foot of the rapid it presents the appearance of a wall of foam. The width of it is reputed to be one mile, and on the British side are several beautiful islands, covered with hemlock, spruce, and pine, pleasingly intermingled with birch. The bed of the river at this point consists chiefly of coloured sand-stones, the depth varies from ten to perhaps one hundred feet, and the water is perpetually cold, and as clear as it is possible for any element to be. But what makes the Sault particularly attractive to the angler, is the fact that the common trout is found here in good condition throughout the year. They are taken with the fly, and from boats anchored in the more shallow places of the river, as well as from the shore. We have known two fishermen to spend an entire day in a single reef, or at one anchorage, and, in spite of sunlight and east-winds, have known them to capture more than a cart load of the spotted beauties, varying in weight from half a pound to three and four. How it is that the fish of this region always appear to be in season has never been explained but we should imagine that either they have no particular time for spawning, or that each season brings with it a variety peculiar

to itself. Those of the present day who visit Sault St. Marie for the purpose of throwing the fly, ought to be fully prepared with tackle, and that of the best quality. With regard to the *creature comforts* obtainable in the village of Sault St. Marie, they will be as well supplied as in any other place of the same size equally remote from the civilized centre of the world. And when the pleasures of trout fishing begin to subside they can relieve the monotony of a sojourn here by visiting the Indians in their wigwams, and seeing them capture (with nets, in the pure white foam) the beautiful white fish; they may also with little difficulty visit the copper mines of Lake Superior, or, if they would do their country service (provided they are Americans.) they may indite long letters to members of Congress on the great necessity of a ship canal around the falls or rapids of St. Mary.

And now for the island of Mackinaw. For an elaborate description of this spot we refer our readers to any of the numerous travellers who have published its praises, not forgetting, by way of being *impartial*, an account from our own pen already before the public. The time is rapidly approaching, we believe, when this island will be universally considered one of the most healthful, interesting, convenient, and fashionable watering-places in the whole country. And the naturalists, not to say the angler, will find here the celebrated Mackinaw trout in its greatest perfection. And when the Detroit and Chicago steamer runs into the little crescent harbour of the island for the purpose of landing the traveller, and he discovers among the people on the dock some half-dozen wheelbarrows laden with fish four feet long and weighing fifty or sixty pounds, he must not be alarmed at finding those fish to be Mackinaw trout, and not sturgeon, as he might at first have imagined. The truth is, the very size of these fish is an objection to them, for, as they have to be taken in deep water, and with a large cord, there is far more of manual labour than sport in taking them. But when one of these monsters happens to stray towards the shore where the water is not over fifty feet, it is then, through the marvellously clear water, exceedingly pleasant to watch their movements as they swim about over the beds of pure white sand. As before intimated, the

Mackinaw trout is far inferior to the common trout as an article of food, and to the white fish almost infinitely so.

The Mackinaw trout (as is the case with all salmon trout) is in fine condition throughout the winter months; and the Indians are very fond of taking them through the ice. Their manner of proceeding is to make a large hole in the ice, over which they erect a kind of wigwam, so as to keep out the light; and, stationing themselves above the hole, they lure the trout from the bottom by an artificial bait, and when he comes sufficiently near pick him out with a spear: and they are also taken with a hook. The voraciousness of the Mackinaw trout at this season is said to be astonishing; and it is recorded of a Canadian fisherman, that, having lost all his artificial bait by being bitten to pieces, he finally resorted to a large jackknife attached to a hook which he had in his pocket, and which was swallowed by a thirty pound fish. Another anecdote that we have heard touching this mode of winter fishing, is as follows, and shows the danger with which it is sometimes attended. An Indian fisherman, of renown among the tribes of Lake Superior, while fishing on this lake in the manner above mentioned, at a considerable distance from the shore, was once detached with a cake of ice from the shore and carried into the lake by the wind, and was never heard of more. Such a death as he must have met with it would be difficult to describe.

But we cannot leave Mackinaw without making a passing allusion to the fish whose Indian name is *ciscovet*. It is a handsome fish, unquestionably of the trout family, a bold biter, richly flavoured, and very beautiful, both in symmetry and colour. They are not very abundant, and are altogether the greatest fishy delicacy in this region, excepting the white fish. They weigh from five to ten pounds, and are remarkable for their fatness. At the Island of Mackinaw the common trout is not found at all, but in all the streams upon the main shore of Lake Michigan, which is only a short distance off, they are very abundant and very large.

Another trouting region whose praises we are disposed to sing, is that of northern New York, lying between Lake George and Long Lake. All the running waters of this section of country

are abundantly supplied with common trout, and all the lakes (which are numerous) with salmon trout. The scenery everywhere is of the wildest and most imposing character. The two branches of the noble Hudson here take their rise, and almost every rood of their serpentine courses abounds in rapid and deep pools, yielding common trout of the largest size. But the angler who visits this region must not expect to be feasted with the fashionable delicacies of the land, or spend his nights in luxuriantly furnished rooms; he must be a lover of salt pork, and well acquainted with the yielding qualities of a pine floor. To those of our readers who would become better acquainted with the region alluded to, we would recommend the interesting descriptions of Charles F. Hoffman, Esq., and the spirited, though somewhat fantastic ones of J. T. Headley, Esq.

In the "times of old" we have enjoyed ourselves exceedingly in making piscatorial pilgrimages among the Catskill and Shandaken Mountains, but their wilderness glory is rapidly departing. We can now only recommend this region as abounding in beautiful as well as magnificent scenery. Now, while we think of it, however, we have one little incident to record connected with Shew's Lake, which beautifies the summit of one of the Catskills. Having once caught a large number of small common trout in a stream that ran out of this lake, we conceived the idea that the lake itself must of necessity contain a large number of full-grown fish of the same species. With this idea in view, we obtained the services of a mountaineer named Hummel, and tried our luck at the lake, by the light of the moon, with set lines and live minnows. During the night we caught no less than forty-two trout, averaging in weight over a pound apiece. We were of course greatly elated at this success; and, having enjoyed quite a romantic expedition, we subsequently published an account of the particulars. A few days after this, a party of anglers residing in the town of Catskill saw what we had written, and immediately posted off to Shew's Lake, for the purpose of spending a night there. They did so, and also fished after the same manner that we did, and yet did not capture a single trout. They of course returned home considerably disgusted, and reported

the lake in question was covered with dead eels, that the water was alive with lizards, that they saw the glaring eyes of a panther near their watch-fire, and that *we* had been guilty of publishing a falsehood. It now becomes us to deny, and in the most expressive tone, this rough impeachment, although we fully confess that there still hangs a mystery over our piscatorial good fortune.

If the anglers of New York city are to be believed, there is no region in the world like Long Island for common trout. We are informed, however, that the fish are here penned up in ponds, and that a stipulated sum per head has to be paid for all the fish captured. With this kind of business we have never had any patience, and we shall therefore refrain from commenting upon the exploits or trespassing upon the exclusive privileges of the cockney anglers of the empire city.

But another trouting region, of which we can safely speak in the most flattering terms, is that watered by the two principal tributaries of the river Thames, in Connecticut, viz., the Yantic and the Quinnebaug. It is, in our opinion, more nearly allied to that portion of England made famous by Walton in his *Complete Angler*, than any other in the United States. The country is generally highly cultivated, but along nearly all its very beautiful streams Nature has been permitted to have her own way, and the dark pools are everywhere overshadowed by the foliage of overhanging trees. Excepting in the immediate vicinity of the factories, trout are quite abundant, and the anglers are generally worthy members of the gentle brotherhood. When the angler is overtaken by night, he never finds himself at a loss for a place to sleep; and it has always seemed to us that the beds of this region have a "smell of lavender." The husbandmen whom you meet here are intelligent, and their wives neat, affable, and polite, understanding the art of preparing a frugal meal to perfection. Our trouting recollections of this section of New England are manifold, and we would part with them most unwillingly. Dearly do we cherish, not only recollections of scenery and fishing, but of wild legends and strange characters, bright skies, poetic conceptions, and soul-instructing lessons from Nature. Yes, and the secret of our attachment to the above-mentioned

streams may be found in the character of these very associations. What intense enjoyment would not Father Walton have derived from their wild and superb scenery! The streams of England are mostly famous for the bloody battles and sieges which they witnessed for many centuries, and the turreted castles which they lave tell us eventful stories of a race of earth-born kings. But many of the streams of our country, even in these days, water a virgin wilderness, whose only human denizens are the poor but noble Indian tribes, who live, and love, and die in their peaceful valleys; and the unshorn forests, with the luxuriantly magnificent mountains, sing a perpetual hymn of praise to One who is above the sky, and the King of kings.

Of all the New England States, however (albeit much might be written in praise of Vermont and New Hampshire, with their glorious Green and White Mountains,) we believe that Maine is altogether the best supplied. In the head waters of the Penobscot and Kennebec, the common trout may be found by the thousand; and in Moosehead Lake, as before stated, salmon trout of the largest size and in great numbers. This is even a more perfect wilderness than that in the northern part of New York, and it is distinguished not only for its superb scenery, but its fine forests afford an abundance of large game, such as moose, deer, bears, and wolves, which constitute a most decided attraction to those disciples of the gentle art who have a little of the fire of Nimrod in their natures.

Another, and the last region towards which we would direct the attention of our readers, is that portion of Canada lying on the north shore of the St. Lawrence. At the mouth of all the streams here emptying into the great river, and especially at the mouth of the Saguenay, the sea trout is found in its greatest perfection. They vary from five to fifteen pounds, and are taken with the fly. But what makes the fishing for them particularly interesting is the fact, that when the angler strikes a fish it is impossible for him to tell, before he has seen his prize, whether he has captured a salmon trout, a mammoth trout, common trout, (which are here found in brackish or salt water,) or a magnificent salmon, glistening in his silver mail.

CHAPTER XXXV.

BASSE FISHING.

"We delight, as all the world has long well known, in every kind of fishing, from the whale to the minnow."—CHRISTOPHER NORTH.

THE beautiful fish now chosen for our "subject theme" is a genuine *native American*, and ranks high among the game fish of the country. When fully grown, he is commonly about fifteen inches long, two inches in thickness, and some five inches broad, weighing perhaps five or six pounds. He belongs to the perch family, has a thick oval head, a swallow tail, sharp teeth, and small scales. In colour, he is deep black along the back and sides, growing lighter and somewhat yellowish towards the belly. He has a large mouth, and is a bold biter, feeds upon minnows and insects, is strong and active, and, when in season, possesses a fine flavour. He spawns in the spring, recovers in July, and is in his prime in September.

The black basse is peculiarly a Western fish, and is not known in any of the rivers which connect immediately with the Atlantic Ocean. They are found in great abundance in the upper Mississippi and its tributaries, in all the great lakes excepting Superior, in the upper St. Lawrence, in Lake Champlain and Lake George, and nearly all the smaller lakes of New York. In portions of the last-named state they are called the Oswego basse, in the southwest the black perch, and in the northwest, where they are most abundant, the black basse. In nearly all the waters where they abound has it been our good fortune to angle for the fish, and his very name is associated with much of the most beautiful scenery in the land. Our own experience, however, in basse fishing is chiefly identified with Lake George, Lake

Erie, Lake Michigan, and the upper Mississippi, and to these waters alone is it our purpose to devote a few paragraphs.

And, first, as to the beautiful "Horicon" of the North. Embosomed as it is among the wildest of mountains, and rivalling, as do its waters, the blue of heaven, it is indeed all that could be desired, and in every particular worthy of its fame. Although this lake is distinguished for the number and variety of its trout, I am inclined to believe that the black basse found here afford the angler the greatest amount of sport. They are taken during the entire summer, and by almost as great a variety of methods as there are anglers; trolling with a minnow, however, and fishing with a gaudy fly from the numerous islands in the lake, are unquestionably the two most successful methods. As before intimated, the basse is a very active fish, and, excepting the salmon, we know of none that perform, when hooked, such desperate leaps out of the water. They commonly frequent the immediate vicinity of the shores, especially those that are rocky, and are seldom taken where the water is more than twenty feet deep. They commonly lie close to the bottom, rise to the minnow or fly quite as quickly as the trout, and are not as easily frightened by the human form.

The late William Caldwell, who owned an extensive estate at the southern extremity of Lake George, was the gentleman who first introduced us to the basse of the said lake, and we shall ever remember him as one of the most accomplished and gentlemanly anglers we have ever known. He was partial to the trolling method of fishing, however, and the manner in which he performed a piscatorial expedition was somewhat unique and romantic. His right hand man on all occasions was a worthy mountaineer, who lived in the vicinity of his mansion, and whose principal business was to take care of the angler's boat, and row him over the lake. For many years did this agreeable connection exist between Mr. Caldwell and his boatman, and, when their fishing days were over, was happily terminated by the deeding of a handsome farm to the latter by his munificent employer. But we intended to describe one of Mr. Caldwell's excursions.

It is a July morning, and our venerable angler, with his boatman, has embarked in his feathery skiff. The lake is thirty-three miles long, and it is his intention to perform its entire circuit, thereby voyaging at least seventy miles. He purposes to be absent about a week, and having no less than half a dozen places on the lake-shore where he can find a night's lodging, he is in no danger of being compelled to camp out. His little vessel is abundantly supplied with fishing tackle, as well as the substantials of life, and some of its liquid luxuries. He and *Care* have parted company, and his heart is now wholly open to the influences of Nature, and therefore buoyant as the boat which bears him over the translucent waters. The first day his luck is bad, and he tarries at a certain point for the purpose of witnessing the concluding scene of a deer hunt, and hearing the successful hunter expatiate upon his exploits and the quality of his hounds. On the second day the wind is from the south, and he secures no less than twenty of the finest basse in the lake. On the third day he also has good luck, but is greatly annoyed by thunder showers, and must content himself with one of the late magazines which he has brought along for such emergencies. The fifth and sixth days he has some good fishing, and spends them at Garfield's landing (for the reader must know that there is a tiny steamboat on Lake George,) where he has an opportunity of meeting a brotherhood of anglers, who are baiting for the salmon trout; and the seventh day he probably spends quietly at Lyman's Tavern, in the companionship of an intelligent landscape painter (spending the summer there,) arriving at home on the following morning.

As to our own experience in regard to basse fishing in Lake George, we remember one incident in particular which illustrates an interesting truth in natural history. We were on a trouting expedition, and happened to reach the lake early in June, before the basse were in season, and we were stopping with our friend Mr. Lyman, of Lyman's Point. The idea having occurred to us of spearing a few fish by torchlight, we secured the services of an experienced fisherman, and, with a boat well supplied with *fat pine*, we launched ourselves on the quiet waters of the lake

about an hour after sundown. Basse were very abundant, and we succeeded in killing some half dozen of a large size. We found them exceedingly tame, and noticed, when we approached, that they were invariably alône, occupying the centre of a circular and sandy place among the rocks and stones. We inquired the cause of this, and were told that the basse were casting their spawn, and that the circular places were the beds where the young were protected. On hearing this, our conscience was somewhat troubled by what we had been doing, but we resolved to take one more fish and then go home. We now came to a large bed, around the edge of which we discovered a number of very small fish, and over the centre of the bed a very large and handsome basse was hovering. We darted our spear, and only wounded the poor fish. Our companion then told us, that if we would go away for fifteen minutes, and then return to the same spot, we should have another chance at the same fish. We did so, and the prediction was realized. We threw the spear again, and again failed in killing our game, though we succeeded in nearly cutting the fish in two pieces. "You will have the creature yet; let us go away again," said my companion. We did so, and lo! to our utter astonishment, we again saw the fish, all mutilated and torn, still hovering over its tender offspring! To relieve it of its pain, we darted the spear once more, and the basse lay in our boat quite dead; and we returned to our lodgings on that night a decidedly unhappy man. We felt, with the *ancient mariner*, that we "*had done a hellish deed*," and most bitterly did we repent our folly. Ever since that time have we felt a desire to atone for our wickedness, and we trust that the shade of Izaak Walton will receive our humble confession as an atonement. The basse that we took on the night in question, owing to their being out of season, were not fit to eat, and we had not even the plea of palatable food to offer. The maternal affection of that black basse for its helpless offspring, which it protected even unto death, has ever seemed to us in strict keeping with the loveliness and holiness of universal nature.

And now with regard to Lake Erie. We know not of a single prominent river emptying into this lake in which the black

basse is not found in considerable numbers. The sport which they yield to the disciples of Walton at the eastern extremity of the lake, has been described, by George W. Clinton, Esq., of Buffalo, in a series of piscatorial letters published in the journals of that city; and, as we would not interfere with him while throwing the fly in his company on the same stream, neither will we trespass upon that literary ground which he has so handsomely made his own. When, however, we hear the green waves of Lake Erie washing its western shores, we feel that we have a right to be heard, for in that region, when it was for the most part a lonely wilderness, did we first behold the light of this beautiful world. With the windings of the Sandusky, the Maumee, the Huron, and the Detroit rivers, we are quite familiar, and we know that they all yield an abundance of black basse; but with the river Raisin, we are as well acquainted as a child could be with its mother's bosom. Upon this stream was the home of our boyhood, and at the bare mention of its name, unnumbered recollections flit across the mind, which to our hearts are inexpressibly dear.

Even when a mere boy we esteemed the black basse as a peer among his fellows, and never can we forget our first prize. We had seated ourself at the foot of an old sycamore, directly on the margin of the river Raisin, and among its serpent-like roots we were fishing for a number of tiny rock basse that we had chanced to discover there. We baited with a worm, and while doing our utmost to capture a two-ounce fish, we were suddenly frightened by the appearance of a black basse, which took our hook, and was soon dangling in the top a neighbouring bush. Our delight at this unexpected exploit was unbounded, and, after bothering our friends with an account of it until the night was far spent, we retired to bed, and in our dreams caught the same poor fish over and over again until morning. From that day to this, rivers and fish have haunted us like a passion.

Like the trout, the black basse seems to be partial to the more romantic and poetical places, in the rivers which they frequent. On the river Raisin, for example, we used to enjoy the rarest of

sport at an old and partly dilapidated mill-dam, which was covered with moss, and at the foot of which were some of the nicest "deep holes" imaginable. Wherever the timbers of the dam formed a "loop-hole of retreat," there we were always sure of finding a basse. And we also remember an old mill, in whose shadowy recesses, far down among the foundation timbers, the basse delighted to congregate, and where we were wont to spend many of our Saturday afternoons; but our favourite expeditions were those which occupied entire days, and led us along the banks of the Raisin, in the vicinity of its mouth, and far beyond the hearing of the mill-wheel or the clink of the blacksmith's anvil. At such times, the discovery of old sunken logs was all that we cared for, for we knew that the basse delighted to spend the noontide hours in their shadow. And when we could borrow a canoe, and obtain a foothold on the extreme point of a wooded island, so as to angle in the deep dark holes, we seldom failed in realizing all the enjoyment that we anticipated. And, if we chanced to come across a party of fishermen drawing the seine, we were sure to forget our promise to our parents to return home before sundown, and, far too often for a good boy, did we remain with them even until the moon had taken her station in the sky. To count the fish thus captured, and to hear the strange adventures and exploits talked over by these fishermen, was indeed a delightful species of vagabondizing; and we usually avoided a very severe scolding by returning home "with one of the largest basse ever caught in the river," which we may have taken with the hook or purchased of the fishermen. But we are talking of the "times of the days of old," and as we remember that the glories of the River Raisin, in regard to its scenery and its fish, are for ever departed, we hasten to other waters.

In fancy we have now crossed the peninsula of Michigan, or rather compassed it by means of the splendid steamers which navigate the waters of Huron and Michigan, and we are now on the banks of the river St. Joseph. This is a small river, and unquestionably one of the most beautiful in the western world. It runs through an exceedingly fertile country, abounds in

luxuriant islands, is invariably as clear as crystal, and in its course winding to an uncommon degree. It is navigable for small steamboats to the village of Niles, fifty miles from its mouth, and for bateaux somewhere about fifty miles further towards its source. Early in the spring it abounds in the more common varieties of fresh-water fish, but throughout the summer and autumn it yields the black basse in the greatest abundance.

Our piscatorial experience upon the St. Joseph has not been very extensive, but we deem it worthy of a passing notice. We were on our way to the "Far West," and had been waylaid in the beautiful village of Niles by one of the fevers of the country. The physician who attended us was a genuine angler, and we believe that our speedy recovery was owing almost entirely to the capital fish stories with which he regaled us during that uncomfortable period. Be that as it may, one thing we very clearly remember, which is this: that we enjoyed for one afternoon, some of the most remarkable basse fishing in his company that we have ever experienced. It was in September, and we commenced fishing at three o'clock. We baited with live minnows, fished with hand lines, and from a boat which was firmly anchored at a bend of the river, and just above a long and very deep hole, two miles above the village of Niles. Our lines were upwards of a hundred feet long, and, as the current was very rapid, the pulling in of our minnows was performed with little trouble. The sun was shining brightly, and the only sounds which floated in the air were the singing of birds, the rustling of the forest leaves, and the gentle murmuring of the waters as they glided along the luxuriant banks of the stream. We fished a little more than two hours, but in that time we caught no less than ninety-two basse, a dozen of which weighed over five pounds, and the great majority not less than two pounds. Such remarkable luck had never been heard of before in that vicinity, and of course for several days thereafter the river was covered with boats; but, strange to say, nearly all the anglers returned home disappointed. On a subsequent occasion, the doctor and his patient made another trial at their favourite spot, but succeeded

in taking only a single fish, from which circumstance we came to the conclusion that we had actually cleared that portion of the river of its fishy inhabitants.

Before quitting the St. Joseph, we ought to state that its beautiful tributaries, the Pipe Stone and the Paw-Paw, afford a superior quality of basse, and that no pleasanter fishing-ground can anywhere be found than at the mouth of the parent river itself. With regard to the other principal rivers of western Michigan, we can only say that the Kalamazoo and the Grand river are not one whit behind the St. Joseph in any of those charms which win the affections of the angler and the lover of nature.

We come now to speak of the upper Mississippi, in whose translucent water, as before stated, the black basse is found in "numbers numberless." Not only do they abound in the river itself and its noble tributaries, but also in the lakes of the entire region. The only people who angle for them, however, are the travellers who occasionally penetrate into this beautiful wilderness of the North-west. Generally speaking the basse, as well as all other kinds of fish, are taken by the Indians with a wooden spear, and more to satisfy hunger than to enjoy the sport. The angler who would cast a fly above Fort Snelling must expect to spend his nights in an Indian lodge instead of a white-washed cottage, to repose upon a bear-skin instead of a bed (such as Walton loved) which "smells of lavender," and to hear the howl of the wolf instead of a "milk-maid's song."

CHAPTER XXXVI.

ROCK FISHING.

Of recreations, there is none
So free as fishing is alone;
All other pastimes do no less
Than mind and body both possess
My hands alone my work can do,
So I can fish and study too.

ISAAK WALTON.

WE consider the rock-fish, or striped basse, one of the finest game fish to be found in American waters. From all that we can learn, it is peculiar to this country, and to particular sections, not being found farther north than Maine, nor farther south than the Carolinas, where it is known as the rock-fish. It varies in weight from six ounces to one hundred pounds; and though a native of the ocean, it spends a portion of every year in the fresh water rivers—yet it seems to be partial to the mouths of our larger estuaries. Our naturalists have pronounced it a member of the perch family, and doubtless with scientific propriety; but we have seen a basse that would outweigh at least four score of the largest perch found in the country. The rock is a thick-set and solid fish, having a strong bony mouth, and sharp teeth. In colour, it varies from a deep green on the back to a rich silvery hue on the belly, and its scales are large and of a metallic lustre. But the distinguishing feature of this fish consists in the striped appearance of its body. Running from the head nearly to the tail, there are no less than eight regularly marked lines, which in the healthy fish are of a deep black. Its eyes are white, head rather long, and the under jaw protrudes

beyond the upper one, somewhat after the manner of the pike. The strength of the basse is equal to that of the salmon, but in activity it is undoubtedly inferior. As an article of food, it is highly valued, and in all the Atlantic cities invariably commands a good price.

The spawning time of this fish we have not positively ascertained, though we believe it to be in the spring or early summer. The New York markets are supplied with them throughout the year, but it is unquestionably true that they are in their prime in the autumn. The smaller individuals frequent the eddies of our rivers, while those of a larger growth seem to have a fancy for the reefs along the coast. On the approach of winter, they do not strike for the deep water, but find a residence in the bays and still arms of the sea, where they remain until the following spring. They begin to take the hook in April, and, generally speaking, afford the angler any quantity of sport until the middle of November. For the smaller fish at the North, the shrimp and minnow are the most successful baits; and for the larger individuals nothing can be better than the skin of an eel, neatly fastened upon a squid. The river fisherman requires a regular equipment of salmon tackle, while he who would capture the monsters of the ocean only needs a couple of stout Kirby hooks, a small sinker, a very long and heavy line, a gaff hook, and a surf boat. But those who capture the basse for lucrative purposes resort to the following more effectual methods—first by using set lines, and secondly by the employment of gill-nets and the seine. The sport of taking a twenty-pound basse in a convenient river is allied to that of capturing a salmon, but as the former is not a very skittish fish, the difficulties are not so great. As before intimated, all our Atlantic rivers, from the Penobscot to the Savannah, are regularly visited by the basse; but we are inclined to believe that they are found in the greatest abundance and perfection along the shores of Connecticut, Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Maine. At any rate, our own experience has been confined to this region; and though we remember with unfeigned pleasure our success in taking the larger varieties along the shores of Martha's Vineyard, at Mon-

tauk Point, and in the vicinity of Watch Hill, yet we are disposed to yield the palm to Black Island. This out-of-the-way spot of the green earth belongs to Rhode Island, comprises a whole county of that state, and lies about forty miles from the main shore. It is nine miles in length, and varies in width from three to four miles. It is quite hilly, with an occasional rocky shore, contains a number of salt-water ponds, and is covered with a scanty growth of trees and other vegetation. The male inhabitants, numbering only a few hundred souls, are devoted exclusively to the fishing business, and they are as amiable and honest at heart, as they are rude and isolated in their manner of life. Block Island sailors frequently find their way to the remotest quarters of the globe, though few who were born upon the island ever become entirely weaned from its ocean-girt shores. The Block Island fishermen build their own smacks, and as these are about the only things they do manufacture, they have acquired remarkable skill in building swift vessels, which are also distinguished for their strength and safety.

The pleasantest time to kill basse at Block Island is in the month of October, and immediately after a severe gale, for then it is that the larger fish seek a sheltering place between the reefs and the shore. And if the angler would be certain of success, he ought to be upon the water before sunrise, or at the break of day. He must have only one companion, a stalwart Block Islander, whose duty it shall be to steady the boat, as she dashes along upon the restless bosom of the ground swell, so that, with his legs carefully braced, he can throw his squid to a great distance, instead of being thrown himself into the sea. And if an occasional shark should stray into the vicinity of his boat, he must not suffer himself to be alarmed, for a single discharge from the fisherman's pistol (which he usually carries for that purpose) will be sure to frighten the monster out of his way. Gulls without number, large and small, of a dark grey and a pure white, will be sure to fly screaming above his head, and their wild chorus will mingle well with the monotonous war of the waves as they sweep upon the shore. The fatigue attendant upon this mode of fishing is uncommonly great; and if the angler

should happen to strike a forty-pounder, he will be perfectly satisfied with that single prize; but if his luck should lie among the smaller varieties, he ought to be content with about half a dozen specimens, weighing from ten to fifteen pounds, which would probably be the result of the morning's expedition. On returning to the shore, the angler will find himself in a most impatient mood for breakfast; but with a view of enhancing the anticipated enjoyment, he should first throw aside his clothes and make a number of plunges in the pure white surf, which will cause him to feel as strong and supple as a leopard.

We did think of commenting upon Block Island as a most fitting place to study the mighty ocean, for the waves which wash its shores come from the four quarters of the globe. It so happens, however, that we have just been reading a passage in an admirable little volume entitled "*The Owl Creek Letters*" (the author is a man after our own heart,) which was written at Block Island, and we are sure the passage in question would "take the wind out of any sail" that our pen might produce. The passage alluded to is as follows:—

"Men speak of our 'mother the earth.' But I never could appreciate the metaphor. A hard mother is old Terra. She refuses us food, save when compelled by hard struggling with her, and then yields it reluctantly. She deceives us too often, and finally takes us, when worn and weary, only by the difficult digging of a grave.

"But the ocean is mother-like, singing songs to us continually, and telling a thousand legends to our baby ears. She casts up toys to us on every shore, bright shells and pebbles. (What else do we live for?) True, maniac as she is, she sometimes raves madly and hurls her children from her arms, but see how instantly she clasps them again close, close to her heaving bosom, and how calmly and quietly they sleep there—as she sings to them—nor wake again to sorrow."

As to bass-fishing in the vicinity of New-York, where scientific anglers are abundant, it affords us pleasure to give our readers the following account, written at our request by G. C. Scott, Esq., who is distinguished for his love and practical knowledge of the gentle art.

"The weather and the tide are in our favour, and the moon all right—for this planet, you must know, always gives the basse an excellent appetite and great activity. Speaking of its influence upon the appetite of fish, reminds me that those in the waters near the ocean bite best when the moon is new; whilst salt water fish which are up the creeks and near to fresh water, are killed in the greatest number during high tides, and immediately after a hard 'nor'-easter,' when the wind has shifted to the north-west. You may prove these facts without going half a dozen miles from old Gotham, and I have always noticed that it is better fishing in 'the Kills' and at the hedges of Newark Bay, as well as at those in the lower part of the bay of New York, when the tide is high; while the fishing at King's Bridge and the mouth of Spiting Devil is always best at extreme low tides.

"As we are out after basse, suppose we 'make a day of it,' and first try the bridge at Haerlem Dam. Being an angler yourself, you know of course that much depends upon bait, and we will want to use the best. As it is the month of August, we will purchase a few shedder crabs in the market; and if we find shrimp necessary, we can procure enough of them at either of the fishing-grounds. During the spring, I use shad roes for basse bait; but in summer, and until the first of October, I prefer shedder crabs; after that, I use shrimp and soft-shell clams. Some anglers prefer shrimp at all seasons, as it is well known that small basse are more generally taken with them; but for my part, give me shedder crabs enough, and I will agree to forego the use of all other kinds of bait for basse. Next, you may want to know how to rig your tackle. Where we are going to-day, you want nothing but a good basse rod, reel, and float, with a single gut leader, to which you fasten a hook and attach it to the line one-third of its length from the hook. Use your float only when the tide runs slowly, for bottom fishing is the best for large fish, unless you troll for them when you use a squid and fish in the Bronx with regular trolling tackle, of sufficient strength to land a fish weighing one hundred and fifty pounds, for they are sometimes caught there of that weight, but generally from thirty to eighty pounds.

"Well, having arrived at King's Bridge, and as it is about ebb tide, we will first see what we can kill from the east bridge. I like bridge fishing, for it is so fine to pay out line from; and then in striking a fish thirty yards off, there is so much sport in playing him, and your being such a distance above the water, you generally fasten him at the first bite. Reel off! reel off! you have struck him! There! give him play, but feel his weight and let him contend for every inch of line that you give him, or he will take the whole of it without exhausting himself, and you will lose him. Keep him in slack water, and after playing him until you kill him, land him on the shore, for he is too heavy to risk your tackle in raising him to the bridge. And now, having fished out the last of the ebb and the turn, until the tide runs too fast to use a float, just step into this punt and we will anchor out near the edge of the current, by the first island below the mill, and fish in the current without the float, until the tide turns, when we will make for the mouth of the Spiting Devil, and fish fifty rods below it in the Hudson.

"Now, my friend, this day's sport may be considered a fair criterion for these grounds. We have taken between twenty and thirty basse, but there is only one that weighs over five pounds, and their average weight will not vary much from half that. To-night we will troll in the Bronx, for if the sky be clear, the basse will bite sooner at a squid 'by the light of the moon' than in the day-time; and there is very little use in stopping to try M'Comb's dam, as the sport will not be first-rate there until the Croton acqueduct is finished and the coffer dam is torn away, so that the fish may have a clear run and unobstructed passage between the East and Hudson rivers. It is supposed that this will be effected next year, when M'Comb's dam will retrieve its lost honours, and furnish one of the best places for sport in this vicinity to those who prefer bridge fishing.

"Having given you a taste of the sport on the waters bounding this island on the north and east, let us to-day fasten our punt to the lower hedges of New York bay, and try the difference between 'bottom fishing,' and that 'with the float.' I will remark, in passing, that it is better to anchor your punt about a

rod above the hedge and fish towards the hedge without a float, than to fasten your boat to the hedge, as commonly practised, and fish with a float; for you will notice that while you, in the old way, are continually reeling up and making casts, I am feeling for them with a moving bait towards the bottom, and as near the hedge as I can venture without getting fast. And then when I strike, I am sure to fasten them as they turn from me for the shelter of the hedge. I can also better play my bait without the danger of too much slack. You will see also that I kill the largest fish.

"Let us now up anchor and away for the Kills and to the reef opposite Port Richmond. Here the fish are about as large as those at the hedges we just left. The tide is nearly full, and we will fish without the float until it is about to turn, when we will move over to the Jersey shore, about fifty rods below the mouth of Newark Bay. Here, as the tide is just in the turn, we can fish an hour of the ebb with floats, when it will be best to try bottom-fishing again. Well, if you are tired of killing younglings, varying from one to three pounds, let us put the punt about and prepare for a beautiful row up to the third, fourth, and fifth hedges in Newark Bay—trying each one—and we may strike some fish that will try our tackle. Change your leader for a heavier one, and let go the anchor, for we are three rods above the hedge. The water is quite slack, and we will try the float until the tide ebbs a little more and the current becomes more rapid. There, sir, what think you of that? He feels heavy—see him spin! take care of your line or he'll get foul, as I cannot govern him, and it will be with great difficulty that I keep him out of the hedge. What a splendid leap! I'll see if I can turn him —here he comes—take the landing net—there! there, we have him, and I will bet the champagne that he weighs nearer twenty pounds than ten!

"Thus, my friend, having shown you the principal grounds, and informed you of the bait and tackle to be used in killing basse in this vicinity, I hope that you will not be at loss for piscatorial sport when trying your skill in the waters of old Gotham."

It is now time that we should say something about basse or rock fishing in the South. The only streams frequented by this fish, of which we have any personal knowledge, are the Potomac and Roanoke, though we have heard many wonderful stories related of the James River and the Great Pedee. In speaking of the Potomac we are sorely tempted to indite an episode upon the beautiful and magnificent sweeps which this river makes after it leaves the gorge of Harper's Ferry until it loses itself in Chesapeake Bay, and also upon its historical associations, among which the genius of Washington reigns supreme—but it is our duty to forbear, for we should occupy too much time.

Unquestionably, the finest rock-ground on the Potomac is the place known as the Little Falls, about four miles above Georgetown. At this point the river is only fifty yards wide, and as the water descends not more than about ten feet in running three hundred yards, the place might be more appropriately termed a schute than a fall. The banks on either side are abrupt and picturesque; the bed of the stream is of solid rock, and below the rapids are a number of inviting pools, where the water varies from forty to sixty feet in depth. The tides of the ocean reach no further up the Potomac than this spot, and though the rock-fish are caught in considerable numbers at the Great Falls (which are ten miles farther up the river, and exceedingly romantic,) yet they seem to be partial to the Little Falls, where they are frequently found in very great numbers. They follow the shad and the herring in the spring, but afford an abundance of sport from the 1st of May until the 4th of July, though they are caught in certain portions of the Potomac through the year, but never above the Great Falls. The rock of this portion of the Potomac vary in weight from two to eighteen or twenty pounds, and it is recorded of the anglers and business fishermen, that they frequently kill no less than five hundred fish in a single day. The favourite bait in this region is the belly part of the common herring, as well as the shiner and smelt; but it is frequently the case that a common yellow flannel fly will commit sad havoc among the striped beauties. A stout rod, a large reel and a long line, are important requisites to the better enjoy-

ment of rock-fishing at this point; but as the good standing-places are few in number, many anglers resort to boat-fishing, which is here practised with pleasure and profit. Of the many scientific anglers who visit the Little Falls during the spring and summer, the more expert ones come from Washington; and of one of these a story is related that he once killed no less than eighty handsome rock-fish in a single afternoon. He occupied a dangerous position upon two pointed rocks in the river (one foot upon each rock and elevated some five feet above the water,) and fished in a pool that was some seventy feet down the stream, while the fish were landed by an expert servant stationed on the shore about thirty feet below the spot occupied by the angler. The gentleman alluded to is acknowledged to be the most successful angler in this region, and in an occasional conversation with him, we have obtained a goodly number of piscatorial anecdotes. One or two of them are as follows:—

On one occasion, while playing a good-sized rock-fish, it unfortunately ran around a sharp rock, and by cutting the line made its escape, carrying off the angler's float, and a favourite fly. On the third day after this event a boy who was playing on the river about half a mile below the falls, happened to see a cork darting hither and thither across the surface of the water, and immediately went in pursuit of the life-like piece of wood. After many twistings and turnings and a long row, he finally overtook it, and to his utter astonishment he landed in his boat a very handsome five pound basse. He recognized the fly as the one commonly employed by our angler, to whom the fly, the float, and the fish, were promptly delivered by the honest boy.

Another and a similar incident was as follows:—

Our angling friend had lost another float, by the obstinacy of a fish. About a week after the mishap a fisherman, who had a "trot line" set across the river at Georgetown, for the purpose of taking cat-fish, saw a great splashing in the water near the middle of his line, and on hastening to the spot he had the pleasure of pulling up a very handsome twelve pound basse. After faring sumptuously upon the fish, the fortunate individual took it into his head that the tackle belonged to *the* angler of the

falls, whereupon he delivered it to our friend, accompanied with a statement of the manner in which he made the discovery. The distance travelled by that fish, with a hook in his mouth, was four miles, and it was by the merest accident that his leading string had become entangled with the "trot line."

The angling ground at the Little Falls is annually rented by the proprietors to a couple of men named Joe Paine and Jim Collins, who are the presiding geniuses of the place, and have been such for upwards of twenty years. They pay a rent of seventy dollars per annum, and as they receive from fifty cents to five dollars from every angler who visits them, and as they are occasionally troubled with as many as thirty individuals per day, it may readily be imagined that their income is respectable. Some of Collins' friends allege that he has several thousand dollars stowed away in an old pocket book, which it is his intention to bequeath to a favourite nephew, he himself being a bachelor. The reputation of Jim Collins in this section of country is very extensive, and that this should be the case is not at all strange, for he is a decided original. He is about fifty years of age, measures six feet five inches in height, and the offshoots from the four prongs of his body number *twenty-four* instead of twenty, as in ordinary mortals; I mean by this, that his fingers and toes number no less than twenty-four. Notwithstanding this bountiful supply of appendages, Jim Collins has a great antipathy to useful labour, and is as averse to walking as any web-footed animal. Fishing and sleeping are his two principal employments; and that he is a judge of good whisky, none of his acquaintance would have the hardihood to doubt. The taking of small fish he considers a business beneath his dignity, and the consequence is that his tackle consists of a miniature bed cord, with a hook and cedar pole to match, and his bait a whole herring. He commonly fishes in a boat, and the dexterity with which he "*Kawallups*" the fish upon his lap is truly astonishing. But if you would see Jim Collins in his glory, wait until about the middle of a June afternoon, after he has pocketed some fifteen dollars, and he is sunning himself, with pipe in mouth, upon the rocks, absorbed in *fishy contemplations*. His appearance at such times

is allied to that of a mammoth crane, watching (as he does his cockney brethren of the craft) the movements of a lot of half-fledged water birds.

During the fishing season he is generally actively employed. but the remainder of his time he spends about the Little Falls. as if his presence were indispensable to the safe passage of the waters of the Potomac through this narrow gorge. That Jim Collins should have met with many queer mishaps, during a residence of twenty years on the Potomac, may be readily imagined; but we believe the most unique adventure of which he has ever been the victim, happened on this wise. The substance of the story is as follows:—

Our hero is a great lover of "sturgeon meat," and for many years past it has been a habit with him to fish for that huge leather-mouthed monster, with a large cord and sharp grappling, hooks, sinking them to the bottom with a heavy weight and then dragging them across the bed of the stream; his sense of touch being so exquisite, that he can always tell the instant that his hooks have struck the body of a sturgeon, and when this occurs it is almost certain that the fish becomes a victim to the cruel art. In practising this mode of fishing, Jim Collins invariably occupies a boat alone, which he first anchors in the stream. On one occasion he had been fishing in this manner for a long time without success, and for the want of something more exciting, he had resorted more frequently than usual to his junk bottle. In process of time, however, he found the exercise of fishing decidedly a bore, but as he was determined not to give up the sport, and at the same time was determined to enjoy a quiet nap, he tied the cord to his right arm, and lounged over on his back for the purpose of taking a snooze. There was an unusual calmness in the air and upon the neighbouring hills, and even the few anglers who were throwing the fly at the Falls, did so in the laziest manner imaginable. While matters were in this condition, a sudden splash broke the surrounding stillness, which was immediately followed by a deafening shout, for it was discovered that a sturgeon had pulled poor Collins out of his boat into the swift stream, and he was in great danger of leading him off to the

residence of *David Jones.* At one moment the fisherman seemed to have the upper hand, for he pulled upon his rope, and swore loudly, sprawling about the water like a huge devil fish; but in another instant the fellow would suddenly disappear, and an occasional bubble rising to the surface of the stream was all the evidence that he was not quite drowned. This contest lasted for some fifteen minutes, and had not the sturgeon finally made his escape, Jim Collins would have been no more. As it happened, however, he finally reached the shore, about two hundred yards below the Falls, and as he sat upon a rock, quite as near the river Styx as he was to the Potomac, he lavished some heavy curses upon the escaped sturgeon, and insisted upon it, that the best hooks that man ever made were now for ever lost. Years have elapsed since this occurrence took place, and when the ancient fisherman "hath his will," he recounts the story of this catastrophe with as brilliant a fire in his eye as that which distinguished the countenance of Coleridge's particular friend, the "Ancient Mariner."

Before closing this essay, it is "right and proper" that we should allude to the beautiful scenery that the angler will enjoy in going to and returning from the Little Falls. The entire region, in fact, known by the name of Cooney, and comprehending some fifteen miles of the Potomac, is particularly picturesque, but is at the same time said to be the most barren and useless portion of Virginia. In visiting the falls you have to pass over a kind of wooded and rocky interval, and by an exceedingly rough road, which is annually submerged by the spring freshets. The water here sometimes rises to the height of fifty feet, and often makes a terrible display of its power; on one occasion the water came down the valley with such impetuosity that a certain wall composed of rocks six or eight feet square, and united together with iron, was removed to a distance of many rods from its original position. To the stranger who may visit the Little Falls, we would say, forget not on your return to Washington, the superb prospect which may be seen from the signal tree on the heights of Georgetown. From that point the eye comprehends at one glance, the church spires and elegant residences of Georgetown,

the metropolis of the land, with its capitol and numerous public buildings, and the more remote city of Alexandria, with a reach of the magnificent Potomac, extending a distance of at least thirty miles. The best time to look upon this prospect, is at the sunset hour, when the only sounds that fill the air are the shrieking of swallows, and the faintly heard song of a lazy sailor far away upon the river, where perhaps a score of vessels are lying becalmed, while on the placid stream a retinue of crimson clouds are clearly and beautifully reflected. Scenes of more perfect loveliness are seldom found in any land.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

PIKE FISHING.

If so be the angler catch no fish yet hath he a wholesome walk to the brook-side, and pleasant shade by the sweet silver streams.—ROBERT BURTON.

THE Pike is a common fish in all the temperate, and some of the northern regions of the world; but in no country does he arrive at greater perfection than in the United States. For some unaccountable reason he is generally known in this country as the pickerel; and we would therefore intimate to our readers that our present discourse is to be of the legitimate pike. In England, he is known under the several names of pike, jack, pickerel, and luce. His body is elongated, and nearly of a uniform depth from the head to the tail; the head is also elongated and resembles that of the duck; his mouth is very large and abundantly supplied with sharp teeth, and his scales are small and particularly adhesive; the colour of his back is a dark brown, sides a mottled green or yellow, and belly a silvery white. The reputation of this fish for amiability is far from being enviable, for he is called not only the shark of the fresh waters, but also the tyrant of the liquid plain. He is a cunning and savage creature, and for these reasons even the most humane of fishermen are seldom troubled with conscientious scruples when they succeed in making him a captive. Pliny and Sir Francis Bacon both considered the pike to be the longest lived of any fresh water fish, and Gesner mentions a pike which he thought to be two hundred years old. Of these ancient fellows, Walton remarks, that they have more in them of state than goodness, the middle-sized individuals being considered the best eating. The prominent peculiarity of this fish is his voraciousness.

Edward Jesse relates that five large pike once devoured about eight hundred gudgeons in the course of three weeks. He swallows every animal he can subdue, and is so much of a cannibal that he will devour his own kind full as soon as a common minnow. Young ducks and even kittens have been found in his stomach, and it is said that he often contends with the otter for his prey. Gesner relates that a pike once attacked a mule while it was drinking on the margin of a pond, and his teeth having become fastened in the snout of the astonished beast, he was safely landed on the shore. James Wilson once killed a pike weighing seven pounds, in whose stomach was found another pike weighing over a pound, and in the mouth of the youthful fish was yet discovered a respectable perch. Even men, while wading in a pond, have been attacked by this fresh-water wolf. He is so much of an exterminator, that when placed in a small lake with other fish, it is not long before he becomes "master of all he surveys," having depopulated his watery world of every species but his own. The following story, illustrating the savage propensity of this fish, is related by J. V. C. Smith. A gentleman was angling for pike, and having captured one, subsequently met a shepherd and his dog, and presented the former with his prize. While engaged in clearing his tackle, the dog seated himself unsuspectingly in the immediate vicinity of the pike, and as fate would have it, his tail was ferociously snapped at by the gasping fish. The dog was of course much terrified, ran in every direction to free himself, and at last plunged into the stream. The hair had become so entangled in the fish's teeth, however, that it could not release its hold. The dog again sought the land, and made for his master's cottage, where he was finally freed from his unwilling persecutor; but notwithstanding the unnatural adventure of the fish, he actually sunk his teeth into the stick which was used to force open his jaws.

The pike of this country does not differ essentially from the pike of Europe. His food usually consists of fish and frogs, though he is far from being particular in this matter. He loves a still, shady water, in river or pond, and usually lies in

the vicinity of flags, bulrushes, and water-lilies, though he often shoots out into the clear stream, and on such occasions frequently affords the riflemen good sport. In summer he is taken at the top and in the middle, but in winter at the bottom. His time for spawning is March, and he is in season about eight months in the year. In speaking of the size of this fish, the anglers of Europe have recorded some marvellous stories, of which we know nothing, and care less. In this country they vary from two to four feet in length, and in weight from two to forty pounds; when weighing less than two pounds, he is called a jack. As an article of food he seems to be in good repute; but since we once found a large water-snake in the stomach of a monster fish, we have never touched him when upon the table. He suits not our palate, but as an object of sport we esteem him highly, and can never mention his name without a thrill of pleasure.

In this place we desire to record our opinion against the idea that the pike and maskalunge are one and the same fish. For many years we entertained the opinion that there was no difference between them, only that the latter was merely an overgrown pike. We have more recently had many opportunities of comparing the two species together, and we know that to the careful and scientific observer, there is a marked difference. The head of a maskalunge is the smallest; he is the stoutest fish, is more silvery in colour, grows to a much larger size, and is with difficulty tempted to heed the lures of the angler. They are so precisely similar in their general habits, however, that they must be considered as belonging to the pike family. They are possibly the independent, eccentric, and self-satisfied nabobs of the race to which they belong; always managing to keep the world ignorant of their true character, until after their days are numbered.

We will now mention one or two additional traits, which we had nearly forgotten. The first is, that the pike is as distinguished for his abstinence as for his voracity. During the summer months, his digestive organs seem to be somewhat torpid, and this is the time that he is out of season. During this period he is particularly listless in his movements, spending

nearly all the sunny hours basking near the surface of the water; and as this is the period when the smaller fry are usually commencing their active existence, we cannot but distinguish in this arrangement of nature the wisdom of Providence. Another habit peculiar to this fish is as follows:—During the autumn, he spends the day-time in deep water, and the night in the shallowest water he can find along the shores of river or lake. We have frequently seen them so very near the dry land as to display their fins. What their object can be in thus spending the dark hours, it is hard to determine: is it to enjoy the warmer temperature of the shallow water, or for the purpose of watching and capturing any small land animals that may come to the water to satisfy their thirst? We have heard it alleged that they seek the shore for the purpose of spawning, but it is an established fact that they cast their spawn in the spring; and, besides, the months during which they seek the shore as above stated, are the very ones in which they are in the best condition, and afford the angler the finest sport. Autumn is the time, too, when they are more frequently and more easily taken with the spear, than during any other season. And as to this spearing business, generally speaking, we consider it an abominable practice; but in the case of the savage and obstinate pike, it ought to be countenanced even by the legitimate angler.

We have angled for pike in nearly all the waters of this country where they abound. The immense quantity of book lore that we have read respecting the character of pike tackle, has always seemed to us an intelligent species of nonsense—a kind of literature originally invented by tackle manufacturers. Our own equipment for pike fishing we consider first-rate, and yet it consists only of a heavy rod and reel, a stout linen line, a brass snell, a sharp Kirby hook, and a landing-net. For bait we prefer a live minnow, though a small shiner, or the belly of a yellow perch, is nearly as sure to attract notice. We have taken a pike with a gaudy fly, and also with an artificial minnow, but you cannot depend upon these allurements. Sinkers we seldom use, and the fashionable thing called a float we utterly abominate. We have fished for pike in almost every manner;

but our favourite method has ever been from an anchored boat, when our only companion was a personal friend, and a lover of the written and unwritten poetry of nature. This is the most quiet and contemplative method, and unquestionably one of the most successful ones; for though the pike is not easily frightened, it takes but a single splash of an oar when trolling, to set him a-thinking, which is quite as unfortunate for the angler's success as if he were actually alarmed. Another advantage is, that while swinging to an anchor you may fish at the bottom, if you please, or try the stationary trolling fashion. To make our meaning understood, we would add, that an expert angler can throw his hook in any direction from his boat, to the distance of at least a hundred feet, and in pulling it in, he secures all the advantages that result from the common mode of trolling. The pike is a fish which calls forth a deal of patience, and must be humoured; for he will sometimes scorn the handsomest bait, apparently out of mere spite; but the surest time to take him is when there is a cloudy sky and a southerly breeze. Live fish are the best bait, as we have before remarked, though the leg of a frog is good, and in winter a piece of pork, but nothing can be better than a shiner or a little perch; and it might here be remarked, that as the pike is an epicure in the manner of his eating, it is invariably a good plan to let him have his own time, after he has seized the bait. As to torchlight fishing for pike, though unquestionably out of the pale of the regular angler's sporting, it is attended with much that we must deem poetical and interesting. Who can doubt this proposition when we consider the picturesque effect of a boat and lighted torch, gliding along the wild shores of a lake, on a still, dark night, with one figure noiselessly plying an oar, and the animated attitude of another relieved against the fire-light, and looking into the water like Orpheus into hell? And remember, too, the ousand inhabitants of the liquid element that we see, and most fancy to be endowed with human sympathies. What a pleasure to behold the various finny tribes amid their own chosen haunts, leading, as Leigh Hunt has exquisitely written,

"A cold, sweet, silver life, wrapped in round waves,
Quickened with touches of transporting fear!"

In some of the Northern States fishing for pike with set lines through the ice, is practised to a great extent. The lines are commonly attached to a figure four, by which the fisherman is informed that he has a bite, and if he has many lines out, and the fish are in a humour to be captured, this mode of fishing is really very exciting. Especially so, if the ice is smooth, and the fisherman can attend to his hooks, with a pair of sharp skates attached to his feet.

Another mode for catching pike in the winter, and which we have seen practised in the lakes and rivers of Michigan, is as follows. You cut a large hole in the ice, over which you erect a tent or small portable house; and after taking a seat therein, you let down a bait for the purpose of alluring the fish, and as they follow the hook, even to your feet, you pick them out with a sharp spear.

But it is time that we should change the tone of our discourse, and mention the favourite waters of the American pike. The largest we have ever seen were taken in the upper Mississippi, and on the St. Joseph and Raisin rivers of Michigan, where they are very abundant. They are also found in nearly all the streams emptying into Lakes Michigan, Erie, and Ontario;—also, in the Ohio and its tributaries. We have heard of them in the upper St. Lawrence, and know them to abound in Lake Champlain, and in a large proportion of the lakes and rivers of New England. A very pretty lady once told us that she had seen a pike taken from Lake Champlain, which was as long as the sofa upon which we were seated together, and conversing upon the gentle art of fishing, and the tender one of love. Pike fishing with the hook we have not practised to a very great extent. Our angling experience has been chiefly confined to the smaller lakes of Connecticut, particularly those in the vicinity of Norwich. Our favourite resort has been Gardner's Lake, whose shores are surrounded with pleasant wood-crowned hills, teeming with partridge and wood-cock, and the Sabbath stillness which usually reigns about it is seldom broken, save by the

dipping oar, or the laugh of the light-hearted fisherman. Dearly indeed do we cherish the memory of the pleasant days spent upon this picturesque lake; and we hope it may never be used for any other purpose than to mirror the glories of heaven, and never be visited by any but genuine sportsmen and true-hearted lovers of nature. Preston Lake is another beautiful sheet of water near Norwich, which reminds us of a night adventure. A couple of us had visited it for the purpose of taking pike by torchlight, having brought our spears and dry-pine all the way from Norwich in a one-horse wagon. It was a cold but still autumnal night, and as we tied our horse to a tree in an open field, we had every reason to anticipate a "glorious time." So far as the fish were concerned, we enjoyed fine sport, for we caught about a dozen pike, varying from one to four pounds in weight; but the miseries we subsequently endured were positively intolerable. We had much difficulty in making our boat seaworthy, and, in our impatience to reach the fishing grounds, we misplaced our brandy bottle in the tall grass, and were therefore deprived of its warming companionship. About midnight, a heavy fog began to rise, which not only prevented us from distinguishing a pike from a log of wood, but caused us to become frequently entangled in the top of a dry tree, lying on the water. Our next step, therefore, was to go home, but then came the trouble of finding our "desired haven." This we did happen to find, for a wonder, and having gathered up our plunder, started on our course over the frosty grass after our vehicle and horse. We found them, but it was in a most melancholy plight indeed. Like a couple of large fools, we had omitted to release the horse from the wagon, as we should have done, and the consequence was that he had released himself, by breaking the fills and tearing off the harness, and we discovered him quietly feeding a few paces from the tree to which we had fastened him. What next to do we could not in our utter despair possibly determine; but after a long consultation, we both concluded to mount the miserable horse, and with our fish in hand we actually started upon our miserable journey home. Our fish were so heavy, that we were compelled at the end of

the first mile to throw them away, and as the day was breaking, we entered the silent streets of Norwich, pondering upon the pleasures of pike fishing by torchlight, and solemnly counting the cost of our nocturnal expedition.

But the most successful pike fishing we ever enjoyed was at Crow Wing, on the upper Mississippi. We were spending a few days with an isolated Indian trader of the wilderness, around whose cabin were encamped about three hundred Chippewa Indians. Seldom was it that we allowed a night to pass away without trying our luck with the spear, and as a dozen canoes were often engaged in the same sport, the bosom of the river presented a most romantic and beautiful appearance. Each canoe usually contained two or three individuals, and our torches, which were made of dried birch bark, threw such a flood of light upon the translucent water, that we could see every object in the bed of the river with the utmost distinctness. Beautiful indeed were those fishing scenes, and when the canoes had floated down the river for a mile or two, the homeward-bound races that followed between the shouting Indians, were exciting in the extreme. And what added to our enjoyment of this sporting, was the idea that to grasp the hand of a white man (besides that of our host), we should have to travel one hundred miles through a pathless wilderness. We seldom took any note of time, and sometimes were throwing the spear even when the day was breaking. The largest fish that we saw taken at Crow Wing weighed upwards of forty pounds, and we have known five spearmen to take seventy pike and muskalonge in a single night.

But we must curtail our pike stories, for we purpose to append to our remarks a few interesting observations upon that and a kindred fish, which have been kindly furnished to us by an accomplished scholar, a genuine angler, and a valued friend, John R. Bartlett, Esq.

The pike bears the same relation to the finny tribes that the hyena and jackal do to animals, the vulture to birds, or the spider to insects—one of the most voracious of fishes. He feeds alike on the living or dead; and even those of his own brethren

which are protected by nature against the attacks of other fish, find no protection against him. It is remarkable in the economy of animals, that while nature provides her weaker and smaller creatures with the means of defence against the stronger ones, she has, at the same time, furnished some of the latter with weapons, apparently for the very purpose of overcoming the feeble, however well they may be guarded. Thus, the pike, with its immense jaws, armed with innumerable teeth, is able to seize and crush every kind of fish. Its own kind do not escape, for instances are frequent when a pike of three or four pounds is found in the stomach of one of twelve or fifteen pounds weight.

It is interesting to notice the habits of the pike, which an angler may easily do in still, clear water. They have been characterized as a solitary, melancholy, and bold fish. Never are they found in schools, or even in pairs, as most other fish are, nor are they often seen in open water, where other fish would discover them, and avoid their grasp. When in open water, they lie very near the bottom, quite motionless, appearing like a sunken stick. Their usual and favourite place of resort is among the tall weeds, where they cannot be seen. Here they lie, as it were, in ambush, waiting the approach of some innocent, unsuspecting fish, when they dart forth with a swiftness which none of the finny tribe can attain, seize their harmless victim, and slowly bear it away to some secluded spot. Here they crush their prey with their immense jaws, and leisurely force it into their capacious stomachs. Often, when angling for the pike with a live perch, from a wharf so far raised above the water that I could see every object for twenty feet on either side, a pike has so suddenly darted from a cluster of weeds, beyond the range of my vision, that the first intimation I had of his presence was, that he had seized my bait.

On one occasion, when angling in the St. Lawrence, where pike are very abundant, I put a minnow on my hook, and threw my line towards a mass of weeds, in the hope of tempting a perch to take it. Not many minutes had elapsed before my silvery minnow had tempted the appetite of one, which soon conveyed him to his maw. Knowing that my game was sure, I let him

play about, first allowing him to run to the extent of my line, and then drawing him towards me, when, on a sudden, a pike shot from his hiding-place and seized my perch. I was obliged to let the fellow have his own way, and give him all the time he wanted to swallow the perch, when, with a good deal of difficulty, I succeeded in disabling him, and towed him in triumph to the shore. The perch weighed a pound and a half; the pike ten pounds.

The long and slender form of the pike, tapering towards the head and tail, enables him to move with great rapidity through the water, while his smooth and finless back facilitates his movements through the weeds or marine plants. Thus has nature provided this fish with a form adapted to its habits, and with large and well-armed jaws, to give it a pre-eminence among the finny tribes which inhabit the same waters. I have often thought why so great an enemy, so great a devourer of his race, should be placed among them, favoured by so many advantages. May it not, nay, must it not be for some wise purpose? It is known how very prolific fishes are, and unless some way was provided to lessen the number, our inland waters could not contain the vast numbers which a few years would produce. Most fish live on each other, others on decomposing substances floating about. It is not always the largest that prey on each other, for the sturgeon is one of the largest fresh-water fish, and he subsists on decomposing matter or minute fish. A few pike placed in a lake, would very effectually prevent an over-population. May it not, then, be so ordered, that the inhabitants of the seas, which are not so favoured as those who dwell on the earth's surface, and who have a great variety of food to supply their wants, may have the means of providing their own sustenance by an immense increase of their own species?

Blaine observes that "the abstinence of the pike and jack is no less singular than their voracity; during the summer months their digestive faculties are somewhat torpid, which appears a remarkable peculiarity in pike economy, seeing it must be in inverse ratio to the wants of the fish, for they must be at this time in a state of emaciation from the effects of spawning.

During the summer they are listless, and affect the surface of the water, where in warm sunny weather they seem to bask in a sleepy state for hours together. It is not a little remarkable, that smaller fish appear to be aware when this abstinent state of their foe is upon him; for they who at other times are evidently impressed with an instinctive dread of his presence, are now swimming around him with total unconcern. At these periods, no baits, however tempting, can allure him, but on the contrary, he retreats from everything of the kind. Windy weather is alone capable of exciting his dormant powers. This inaptitude to receive food with the usual keenness, continues from the time they spawn, until the time of their recovery from the effects of it."

The peculiarity above noticed does not entirely apply to the pike of the Northern States, and particularly of the great lakes and rivers whose waters are not so sensibly affected by the heat of summer as shallow water is. In the smaller streams he lies in the listless state described by Mr. Blaine, but when he can reach the deep water he always does so.

Pike are found in all the lakes and inland waters of the Northern and Middle States of the Union. In the great lakes they grow to an enormous size. No fish is better known throughout Europe and the northern parts of Asia. In colder climes he attains the largest size, and is said by Walkenburg to disappear in geographical distribution with the fir. In our waters they are taken of all sizes, from four or five pounds to fifty or sixty. Their haunts are generally among the weeds or marine plants near the shore, or in deep bays where the water is not made rough by winds, and in all parts of rivers. They are rarely found on rocky bottoms or bars. A high wind and rough sea often drives them from their weedy haunts into deeper water. I have noticed this particularly on Lake Ontario. From wharves where basse are only taken on ordinary occasions, pike will bite with avidity when a severe gale is blowing, and the water is in a disturbed state.

This fish, according to Donovan, attains a larger size in a shorter time, in proportion to most others. In the course of the first

year it grows eight or ten inches; the second, twelve or fourteen; the third, eighteen or twenty inches. Some pike were turned into a pond in England, the largest of which weighed two and a half pounds. Four years after, the water was let off, when one pike of nineteen pounds, and others of from eleven to fifteen, were found. Mr. Jesse, in his Gleanings of Natural History, relates certain experiments by which he shows that the growth of pike is about four pounds a year, which corresponds with the growth of those before stated.

The various books on sporting give numerous instances of pike weighing from thirty to forty pounds, taken in England, though an instance is mentioned in Dodsley's Register for 1765, of an enormous pike weighing 170 pounds, which was taken from a pool near Newport, England, which had not been fished in for ages. In Ireland and Scotland, they are found larger than in England. In the Shannon and Lough Corrib, they have been found from seventy to ninety-two pounds in weight. At Broadford, near Limerick, one was taken weighing ninety-six pounds. Another was caught by trolling in Loch Pentlulicher, of fifty pounds; and another in Loch Spey, that weighed 146 pounds. But these are small in comparison with a pike, which is stated by Gesner (and from him quoted by most writers on fish) to have been taken in a pool near the capital of Sweden, in the year 1497, which was fifteen feet in length, and weighed 350 pounds. Under the skin of this enormous fish was discovered a ring of Cyprus brass, having a Greek inscription round the rim, which was interpreted by Dalburgas, Bishop of Worms, to signify: "I am the fish first of all placed in this pond, by the hands of Frederic the Second, on the 5th of October, in the year of grace 1230;" which would make its age 267 years. The ring about his neck was made with springs, so as to enlarge as the fish grew. His skeleton was for a long time preserved at Manheim.

During the past summer which I spent on the banks of the St. Lawrence, I had frequently tried the spool trolling, and always with success. Sometimes I would use two lines, one 70 the other 120 feet in length. On the longer one I had the best success, and my bait would be seized three times, when on the shorter

one it would be but once; it being farther from the boat, the movements of which through the water, and the noise of the oars, drove the fish off. From experience I am satisfied that long trolling lines are the best. Basse will seize a fly or spoon at a few feet distance, but a pike will not. I have tried the experiment, when trolling for pike, to attach to one hook a bait of pork and red flannel, a very common bait, and to the other a brass spoon. The latter was invariably seized first, for the only reason, I suppose, that it made more show in the water. Neither resembled a fish, fly, or any living creature, but curiosity or hunger attracted the fish to the strange bait gliding through the water, which they seized, paying with their lives the penalty for so doing.

There is a large fish of the pike species commonly called the muskalonge or maskalunge before spoken of, of what specific character is not well understood by naturalists. Their habits and their haunts are the same as those of the pike, and they attain a larger size than any fish of our inland waters. I have seen them carried by two men of ordinary height, with a pole running through the gills and supported on the shoulders of the men. In this position the tail of the fish dragged on the ground. Forty or fifty pounds is not an unusual weight for them, and instances are known when much larger ones have been caught. Muskalonge are generally taken in seines, seldom with the hook. Their size is so large that the ordinary baits of anglers would be no temptation to them. In the several opportunities which I have had to examine the stomachs of these fish, I have invariably found within them fish of very large size, such as no angler would ever think of putting on his line. The largest perch I ever saw, about fifteen inches in length, was taken from the paunch of a muskalonge, and I have often seen catfish, perch, and other fish weighing from one to two pounds, taken from them; but in no instance small fish; and hence anglers have not taken them, as few would angle with live bait of that size, where there are no fish but those which would take it.

The most exciting sport I ever had on the St. Lawrence, or any where else, was capturing a muskalonge. It was a regular

battle, such only as salmon anglers enjoy when they hook a twenty-pounder. As the method was very different, I will state the particulars.

A friend and myself took a small skiff, with one trolling line, intending to take turns at the oars, and proceeded at once to a favourite spot among the "Thousand Islands."

I held the trolling line with a spoon hook attached, while my companion pulled the oars. We sailed among the secluded places, wherever weeds were seen below the surface of the water, and were rewarded with good sport by taking several fine pike, weighing from six to fifteen pounds, which we managed to secure with ease, save the largest, which gave us some trouble. We then thought we would try deeper water, in the hope of tempting larger fish. A few windings among the clusters of small islands brought us to the channel of the river, when I directed my companion to increase the speed of our skiff, determined that the curiosity of no fish should be satisfied, without first tasting my gilded spoon. We pulled for half a mile, when the river wound suddenly round an island, which presented a bold shore, from the rushing of the river's current. The tall, forest-trees extended to the very brink of the river, over which they hung, throwing a deep shadow on the water. This quiet spot looked as though it might be an attractive one for some solitary fish, and we accordingly took a sweep around the foot of the island. Scarcely had we entered the deep shade spoken of, when I felt a tug at my line, which was so strong that I supposed my hook had come in contact with a floating log or fallen tree. My companion backed water with his oars to relieve my hook, when another violent pull at my line convinced me, that it was no log, but some living creature of great weight. My line was already out its full length of 150 feet; no alternative was therefore left but to give my fish more line by rowing after him.

This we did for a few minutes, when I began to pull in the slack of my line, some fifty feet or more, when I felt my fish. The check was no sooner felt by him than he started forward with a velocity scarcely conceivable in the water, bringing my line taut, and the next moment our skiff was moving off stern

foremost towards the river's channel. We soon perceived that our fish had turned his head up stream, and as the water was deep, there was no danger of his coming in contact with weeds or protruding rocks. We therefore allowed him to tow us for about five minutes, when he stopped. Then quickly backing water with our oars, and taking in our line, we carefully laid it over the skiff's side, until we had approached within twenty feet of our fish. I then gave him another check, which probably turned his head, for he again darted off in a contrary direction down stream. We pulled our skiff in the same direction as fast as possible to give the fish a good run before checking him again, but he soon had the line out its full length, and was again towing our skiff after him with more rapidity than before. This did not last long, however, for I then took the line and hauled towards him to lessen our distance. He made another slap, when I managed to keep my line taut, and with our oars moved towards him. Our victim now lay on the surface of the water with his belly upward, apparently exhausted, when we found him to be a muskalonge, between five and eight feet in length. We had no sooner got him alongside than he gave a slap with his tail and again darted off the whole length of the line, taking us once more in tow. His run was now short, and it was evident he was getting tired of the business. Again the line slacked, and we drew the skiff up to the spot where he lay turned up on his back.

He now seemed so far gone that I thought we might draw him into our skiff, so I reached out my gaff and hooked him under the jaw, while my companion passed his oar under him. In this way we contrived to raise him over the gunwale of the skiff, when he slid to its bottom. I then placed my foot at the back of his head to hold him down, in order to disengage my hook, which passed through his upper jaw. No sooner had I attempted this than he began to flap about, compelling us to give him room to avoid his immense jaws. Every moment seemed to increase his strength, when my companion seized an oar in order to despatch him, while I took out my knife for the same purpose. The first blow with the oar had only the effect to awaken our fish, which, taking another and more powerful somerset, threw himself over the gun-

wale of our skiff, which was but a few inches above the water, and with a plunge disappeared in the deep water at our side. We had scarcely recovered from our surprise, when I found my line drawn out again to its full length, save a few tangles and twists, which had got into it in the struggle between us and our fish. We determined to trifle no longer with the fellow, with our small skiff, but to make for the shore and there land him. A small island a short distance from us, seemed to present a convenient place, and here without further ceremony we pulled, towing our fish after us. I leaped into the water about ten feet from the shore, and tugged away at my victim, who floated like a log upon the water, while my companion stood by with an oar to make the capture more sure this time. In this way we landed him in safety just one hour and a quarter after he was first hooked. This muskalonge weighed forty-nine pounds, and had within him a pike of three pounds weight, a chub, partially decomposed, of four pounds, and a perch of one and a half pounds, which appeared to have been but recently swallowed; yet this fish's appetite was not satisfied, and he lost his life in grasping at a glittering bauble. Any person who has ever killed a pike of ten pounds or upwards, can readily imagine the strength of one five times its weight.

The great strength of these fish was shown in a sporting adventure which happened to a friend of mine when out a few evenings since, spearing by torchlight. The person alluded to had never before tried his hand with the spear, although he was a skilful angler. On this occasion he had killed several fish, which he secured without trouble. He was then in about six or eight feet of water, when he discovered a large fish, either a very large pike or muskalonge. He planted himself with one foot below the flaming torch, the other a little behind, when he plunged his spear into the huge fish that lay so quietly before him; but whether he was so deceived in the depth of the water, or whether he had not braced himself properly in the boat, is not known, at any rate he struck the fish, which darted off like lightning, taking the spear with him, as well as him who threw it. For the gentleman, probably deceived by the depth of the

water, had reached forward too far and thereby lost his balance. So over he went head foremost, holding on to the spear. But he was satisfied without following the fish further, which escaped with the long spear, neither of which could be again seen. The gentleman made the best of his way into the skiff. Two days after a large muskalonge floated ashore several miles below the spot where the event took place, with the spear still clinging to him, just before the dorsal fin.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

FISHING IN GENERAL.

"We have, indeed, often thought that angling alone offers to man the degree of half-business, half-idleness which the fair sex find in their needle-work or knitting, which, employing the hands, leaves the mind at liberty, and occupying the attention, so far as is necessary to remove the painful sense of a vacuity, yet yields room for contemplation, whether upon things heavenly or earthly, cheerful or melancholy."—SIR WALTER SCOTT.

IN the preceding articles we have given the public the substance of our experience in regard to our five favourite fish, the salmon, trout, pike, rock, and black basse. On the present occasion we purpose to embody within the limits of a single article, our stock of information upon the remaining fish of the United States, which properly come under the jurisdiction of the angler. We shall proceed in our remarks after the manner of the dictionary-makers, and shall take up each variety without any regard to their order, but as they may happen to come into our mind.

The Perch.—With two members of this family alone are we personally acquainted, viz. the yellow perch and the white perch. The first is a beautiful fish, and found in nearly all the waters of the Northern and Middle States, and probably as well known throughout the world as any of the finny tribes. Its predominating colour is yellow; it has an elegant form, is a bold biter, varies in weight from four ounces to a pound, (although occasionally found in New England weighing two pounds;) has a dry and sweet flesh, but ill adapted to satisfy the cravings of a hungry man on account of its bones, which are particularly numerous, hard, and pointed. They generally swim about in *schools*, and yet at the same time are not at all distinguished for their intelli-

gence, being invariably allured to destruction by the most bungling anglers, and the more common kinds of bait. They spawn in the autumn, and recover, so as to be in fine condition, early in the spring. They delight in clear rivers or lakes, with pebbly bottoms, though sometimes found on sandy or clayey soils. They love a moderately deep water, and frequent holes at the mouth of small streams, or the hollows under the banks. With regard to the white perch we have only to say that it is well described by its name, is a migratory fish, found in nearly all the rivers of the Atlantic coast, from Boston to Norfolk; and they weigh from six ounces to one pound, are in season during the spring and summer, are capital as an article of food, and afford the entire brotherhood of anglers an abundance of sport. As touching the name of the fish now before us, we desire to chronicle our opinion respecting an important instance in which it has been misapplied. Many years ago, while reading the remarkable and intensely interesting work of Audubon on the birds of America, we chanced upon the description of a fish, found in the Ohio, to which he gave the name of white perch. Subsequently to that period, while sojourning in the city of Cincinnati, we happened to remember Mr. Audubon's description, and one morning visited the market for the purpose of examining the fish. We found them very abundant, and were informed that they commanded a high price. On examining the fish, however, in view of certain doubts that we had previously entertained (for we knew that the white perch of the brook was a native of salt water), we found it to be not a legitimate white perch, but simply the fish known on Lake Erie as the fresh water sheepshead. But this misapplication of the term perch is not peculiar to the residents on the Ohio, for we know that, throughout the Southern States where the black basse is found, it is universally called the black perch; and that in the vicinity of Boston and Nahant the miserable little fish called the conner is there designated as a black perch. That there are several varieties of the real perch besides those which we have mentioned we do not deny, but we feel confident that the above correction cannot be refuted.

The Muskalonge and Pickerel.—Both of these fish are peculiar

to the United States, and especially to the Great Lakes, and the waters of the St. Lawrence and Mississippi. The former belongs unquestionably to the pike family, although commonly weighing from twenty to forty pounds, while many people affirm that it is only an overgrown pike. They are valued as an article of food, and, by those who are fond of killing the most savage of game at the expense of much labour, they are highly appreciated. The best and about the only valuable account of this fish that we have ever seen, was written by George W. Clinton, Esq., and published in the Buffalo Commercial Advertiser. As to the fish which we call the pickerel, we have to say that it occupies a position somewhere between the trout and perch; that it is a favourite with the anglers of Lake Champlain, Lake Erie, and Lake Michigan, and with those also who practise the gentle art along the borders of the Ohio and the Tennessee. It is an active fish, of a roundish form, with large mouth and sharp teeth, and covered with small scales, the predominating colours being a dark green and yellowish white. The name which it bears is the one so generally applied, but erroneously, to the legitimate pike. It is also the same fish known in the South-west as the salmon, but as unlike the peerless creature of the far North as a grey wolf is unlike a deer. As is the case with the maskalonge, the pickerel is among the first of the finny tribes that run up our Western rivers early in the spring; and in the waters of Lake Champlain and the St. Lawrence they are found herding with the yellow perch, and we believe that in some districts they are considered as belonging to the perch family.

The Catfish.—This fish is distinguished for its many deformities, and is a great favourite with all persons who have a fancy for muddy waters. In the Mississippi they are frequently taken weighing upwards of one hundred pounds; and while they are taken in all the tributaries of that river, it has been ascertained that they decrease in size as you ascend towards the north. They are also found in the tributaries of Lake Erie. They are taken with any kind of bait; and as they are very strong the best of tackle is invariably necessary. This fish is also found in many of the lakes of New England, where they seldom weigh more than

two pounds, being there known as the horn or bull pout, owing to a peculiar pectoral thorn with which they are adorned. Their flesh, though not particularly sweet, is said to be easily digested, and they are often sought for by people with weak stomachs. But it has always seemed to us that it required a very *powerful* stomach to eat a piece from one of the mammoths of the Western waters.

As to the remaining fresh-water fish of the country, we will content ourself by merely mentioning the names of those which are known to our anglers, to wit: the chub, dace, white basse, sunfish, roach, bream, and rock basse. The fish called in Virginia and Maryland the fall fish, is identical with the dace. In the waters of the West the mullet, fresh water sheepshead, and sucker, are found in immense numbers, but they are all exceedingly poor eating, and as sporting fish are of no account. The sturgeon, we believe, is found almost every where, and known to almost every body.

There is a fish found in Florida which we have never seen, but which, from all the descriptions that we have heard, belongs either to the trout or basse families. It abounds in all the rivers, lakes, and springs of this State, is a bold biter, reaches the weight of fifteen pounds, has a white and sweet flesh, and is taken in very much the manner employed by northern anglers in capturing the pike, and with similar artificial baits.

We now come to our favourites of the ocean and tide-water rivers; and the first fish that we mention is the *black fish*, or *tautog*, as it was called by the Mohegan Indians. It is a stationary inhabitant of the salt water, and usually found upon reefs and along rocky shores. It is taken all along the Atlantic coast between New York and Boston, but it has been known north of Cape Cod only within a few years; its legitimate home is Long Island Sound. It is an active, bold, strong, and tough fish, highly esteemed as an article of food, and, like the cod, is brought to the principal markets in floating cars, in which confinement they are said to fatten. They are by no means a handsome fish, and their scales are so adhesive as to be taken off only with the skin. They are a summer fish, being taken as early as April,

and no later than October. A three-pounder is considered a good fish, but we have often taken them weighing ten pounds, and have seen them weighing fifteen pounds. They are generally taken with the hand line, and no better bait can be employed than the lobster or soft crab.

The Sheepshead.—This is a thickset but rather handsome fish, and, for the sweetness of its flesh, highly esteemed. They are seldom seen in the New York market, but very common in the Charleston and Mobile markets, from which we infer that they are partial to southern waters. They vary in weight from three pounds to fourteen; live exclusively upon shellfish, and invariably command a high price. They are popular with the anglers, for they swim in shoals, and are captured with but little trouble.

The Blue Fish.—The name of this glorious fish reminds us of the ground swell, and sends through our whole frame a thrill of pleasure. They are a species of mackerel, attaining in certain places the weight of a dozen pounds. They swim in shoals, and are taken with a trolling line and an ivory squid. Our favourite mode for taking them has ever been from a small boat with a hand line, though many people prefer taking them from a sail-boat when running before a breeze. They are quite as active a fish as we have ever seen, and the strength of their jaws is so great that we have known them to bite off a man's finger. When fresh and fat we consider them quite as delicate as the real mackerel, and much better than the black fish. They are found on the sea-coast as far south as Norfolk (where they are called tailors), but they are particularly abundant along the shores of Connecticut and Rhode Island. In some places we have often found them so numerous, that we have seen a dozen of them darting after our squid at the same instant. They are in season during the whole of summer and autumn.

Another capital fish that we have caught "all along shore" beween New York and Cape Cod, is the *weak fish*, or *squeteague.* It never comes into the fresh water rivers, and usually makes its appearance about harvest time. Its habits are similar to those of the striped basse, and in appearance it closely resembles

the *siscowet* of Lake Superior. They commonly weigh from three to five pounds, though they have been taken weighing nearly ten. They are bold biters, and highly esteemed for their sweetness.

With regard to the remaining fish found on our seabord we are disposed to be brief. The *mackerel* we esteem, and have had rare sport in taking them, but we look upon them as the exclusive property of our merchants. The *halibut* we admire, but fear, for he reminds us of one of the most fatiguing piscatorial adventures we ever experienced, when we hooked a thirty-pounder in the Atlantic, one hundred miles off Nantucket. As to the *cod*, we have only to say that we have caught them off Nahant by the hundred, and never wish to catch any more; like the *mackerel*, we consider them the exclusive property of the mercantile fraternity. With the *king fish* and *drum* we are wholly unacquainted. The *tom cod* and *conner* or *blue perch* we despise, and our antipathy to snakes has always caused us to avoid the eel. Of the *sea basse* and *paugee*, if we knew what to say, we would indite a long paragraph, for we esteem them both. As to the *shad* and *sea sturgeon*, we shall dismiss them with an angler's scorn, for they know not what it is to take the hook. And now that we have reached the bottom of our last page (devoted to the finny tribes) we are reminded of the very peculiar but sweet and valuable fish, which are ever found only at the bottom of the sea—the *flounder* and *flat-fish*. Many a time and oft have we taken them both with the hook and spear, and we can pay them no higher compliment than by mentioning the fact that they are particular favourites with the distinguished painter, *William S. Mount, Esq.*, of Long Island.

THE END.

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